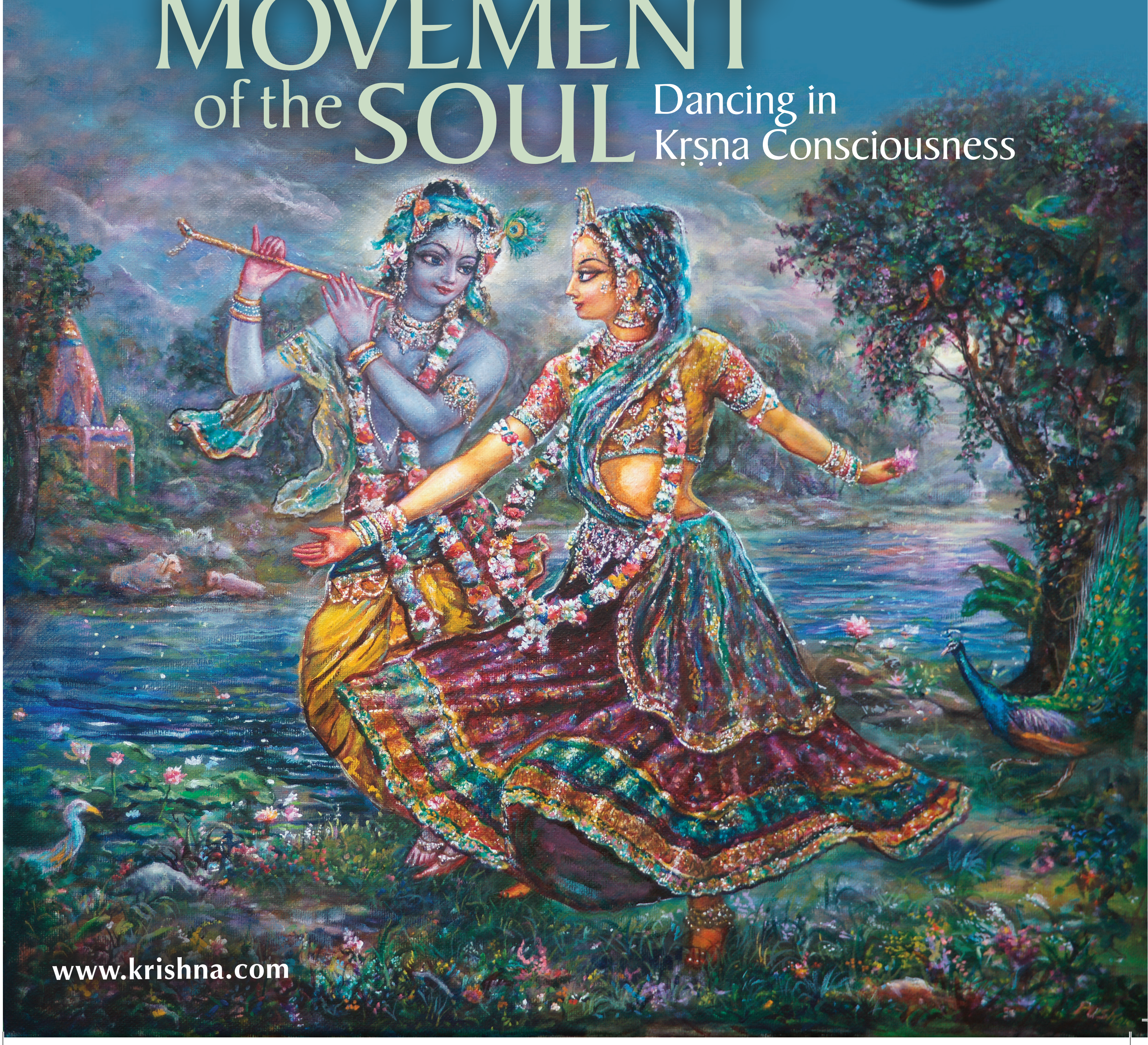
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • May/June 2014 • $4.50

The MOVEMENT of the SOUL

Dancing in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness



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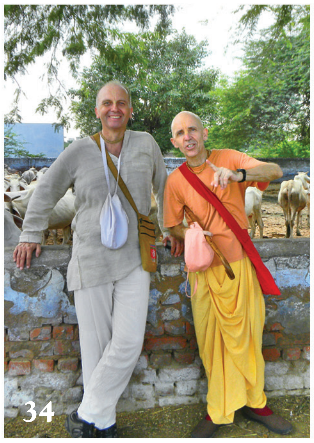
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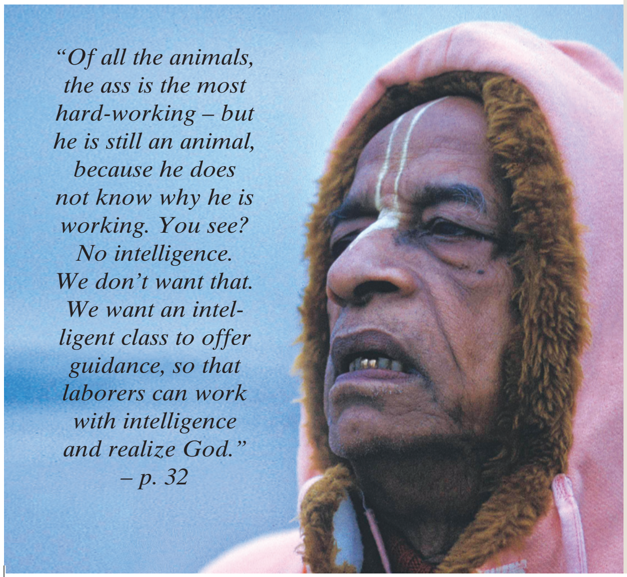
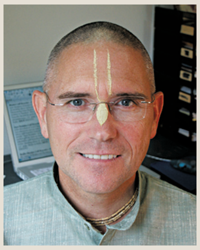
COVER The most confidential parts of the Vedic scriptures reveal that Lord Kṛṣṇa and His eternal consort, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, are the source of everything, including dance, a prominent aspect of the spiritual world, our long-forgotten home. (Painting by Puṣkara Dāsa)



"Of all the animals, the ass is the most hard-working – but he is still an animal, because he does not know why he is working. You see? No intelligence. We don't want that. We want an intelligent class to offer guidance, so that laborers can work with intelligence and realize God."
– p. 32

WELCOME



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu introduced the means to God realization in this age: congregational chanting of the names of God. As anyone who has seen Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees chanting in public can attest, dancing always accompanies our singing. We don't just chant; we chant and dance. In "The Movement of the Soul: Dancing in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness," Satyarāja Dāsa discusses some history of the dancing of Kṛṣṇa's devotees, which traces back to the original dancing couple: Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

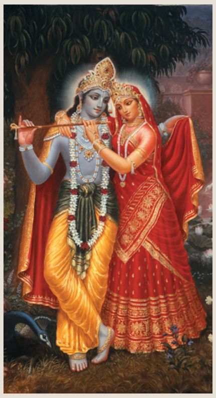
In the earliest days of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, Śrīla Prabhupāda introduced a simple dance his followers dubbed "the Swami step," a mellow move whose performance he occasionally lost to illness. As Brahmānanda Dāsa, one of his first disciples, writes in "The Prayers of Queen Kuntī and Prabhupāda's Triumph Over Adversity," in challenging times Prabhupāda often turned to the prayers of a certain great devotee.

Prabhupāda's illnesses showed that anyone in this world, even someone of his spiritual stature, has to deal with the realities of the soul in a material body. In "Exclusive Controllership Versus Self-Ownership," Dr. Aswini Kumar Misro discusses the limits of our control of our own bodies and helps us see why someone else is controlling behind the scenes.

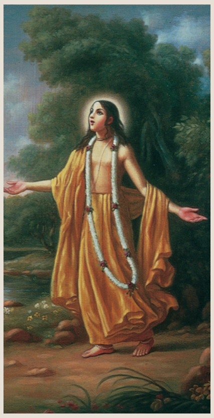
Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BACK TO
GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

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Letters

Turn to Kṛṣṇa

Hello, and I could say Hare Kṛṣṇa, but I am not really eligible! Many years ago I used to go to Bhaktivedanta Manor and used to chant, etc. I often think of the wonderful devotees I used to know who inspired me there. Unfortunately, my life has been governed by alcohol, cigarettes, etc., for the past thirty years or so. I'm sixty-four now, still young at heart, but this path will lead me to destruction if I carry on as I am. I need to be a better person and get my health back, so am turning to Kṛṣṇa for help. What should I do next?

Phil
Via the Internet

Our reply: Please do not ever think you are not eligible to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa or associate with the devotees. We're sure that if you contact the devotees at Bhaktivedanta Manor they will be happy to assist you in getting back on the right track. The history of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, both in modern times and as reported in our scriptures, is replete with persons who were far more crippled by bad habits and materialistic life and then realized their situation and decided to change things for the better. Many of us are aging, and perhaps with maturity we can now understand what Śrīla Prabhupāda told us forty years ago: Life is short, these bodies frail, and the "happiness" coming from intoxication and material lifestyles is fleeting and debilitating. All the hype about enjoyment in the material world is unreal, and the reality in the end is suffering and sadness. Fortunately, due to your previous connection with Kṛṣṇa consciousness you are now remembering the reality. With some help from your friends, you may be able to not only regain your health but also become active again on your journey back to Godhead. It is never too late. Take heart, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, read Prabhupāda's books, and get back in touch with devotees who inspired you.

Mahā-Mantra Concentration

Sometimes my mind is not concentrating on chanting the *mahā-mantra.* Pease help me.

Nandagopal Chessani
Via the Internet

Our reply: Even Arjuna in the *Gītā* said that the mind is more difficult to control than the raging wind, so it is not so surprising that your mind wanders. It is quite a common problem. Kṛṣṇa says the mind can be controlled by constant practice, detachment, and determination. So be patient and keep trying.

There are some things that you can do, however, to help you control the wandering mind.

Chant in the early morning. Chanting attentively is easier when the material world is sleeping and the mode of goodness prevails. The period of about one hour and thirty-five minutes before sunrise is the best. Chant as many rounds as you can before the world starts tugging on you via phone, email, and so on.

Don't eat a lot in the evening. Your body will sleep well but not too heavily by avoiding heavy food before going to sleep. And make sure that before you go to bed your mind is thinking of Kṛṣṇa by reading something about Him.

Regularly read about the glories of the holy name and listen to classes about them as well. There are recordings of the Japa Retreat in Vrindavan on ISKCONdesiretree.com that you can hear to help you to get into your chanting more deeply.

Before you begin your chanting, pray – to the holy name, your spiritual master, and the Lord – to assist you in this service and help you fix your mind.

Chant clearly and pronounce each word out loud. Make sure you get enough rest so you are not tired when you begin to chant. The place where you chant should be well ventilated.

If you find you are drowsy, stand or pace back and forth or go for a walk outside, but best to go somewhere you won't be disturbed by others or distracted by your surroundings.

Start with these suggestions and see if they help.

How to Pursue Happiness

I am a young Nigerian man, a graduate. However, things have not been working for me, and this is really causing me a lot of frustration and depression. Please, how do I handle these challenges practically, and how best can I pursue happiness?

Sunday
Via the Internet

Our reply: We are all pleasure-seekers by nature, but we have chosen to not include Kṛṣṇa, God, in our lives, thinking we can enjoy without Him. If we have learned our lesson, we now have the opportunity to reconnect with Him through the practice of *bhakti-yoga.* We can learn how to please Him, serve Him, and remember Him.

This age is full of distractions, so chanting the names of God, especially as found in the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, is the recommended way to please Him in this age.

You can begin to awaken your spiritual senses, which are full of pleasure, by chanting Kṛṣṇa's holy names and glories, reading and following His instructions, serving Him in every way you can, telling others about Him, offering your food to Him, and taking shelter of His representatives. If you turn to Him in your heart and tell Him you want to please Him in this lifetime, you will feel a loss of distress. You will also feel encouragement from Him to pursue happiness with Him, not alone. It takes two to enjoy, in a reciprocation of love. If you want uninterrupted and eternal happiness, you must include Kṛṣṇa. He will accept your service and adoration.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has opened temples all over the world to help everyone serve Kṛṣṇa. In those temples you can associate with sincere seekers of true happiness. Begin *bhakti-yoga* by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, reading *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and associating with devotees of Kṛṣṇa. That is the guaranteed path to happiness.

Replies were written by Krishna.com Live Help volunteers. Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, Florida 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.

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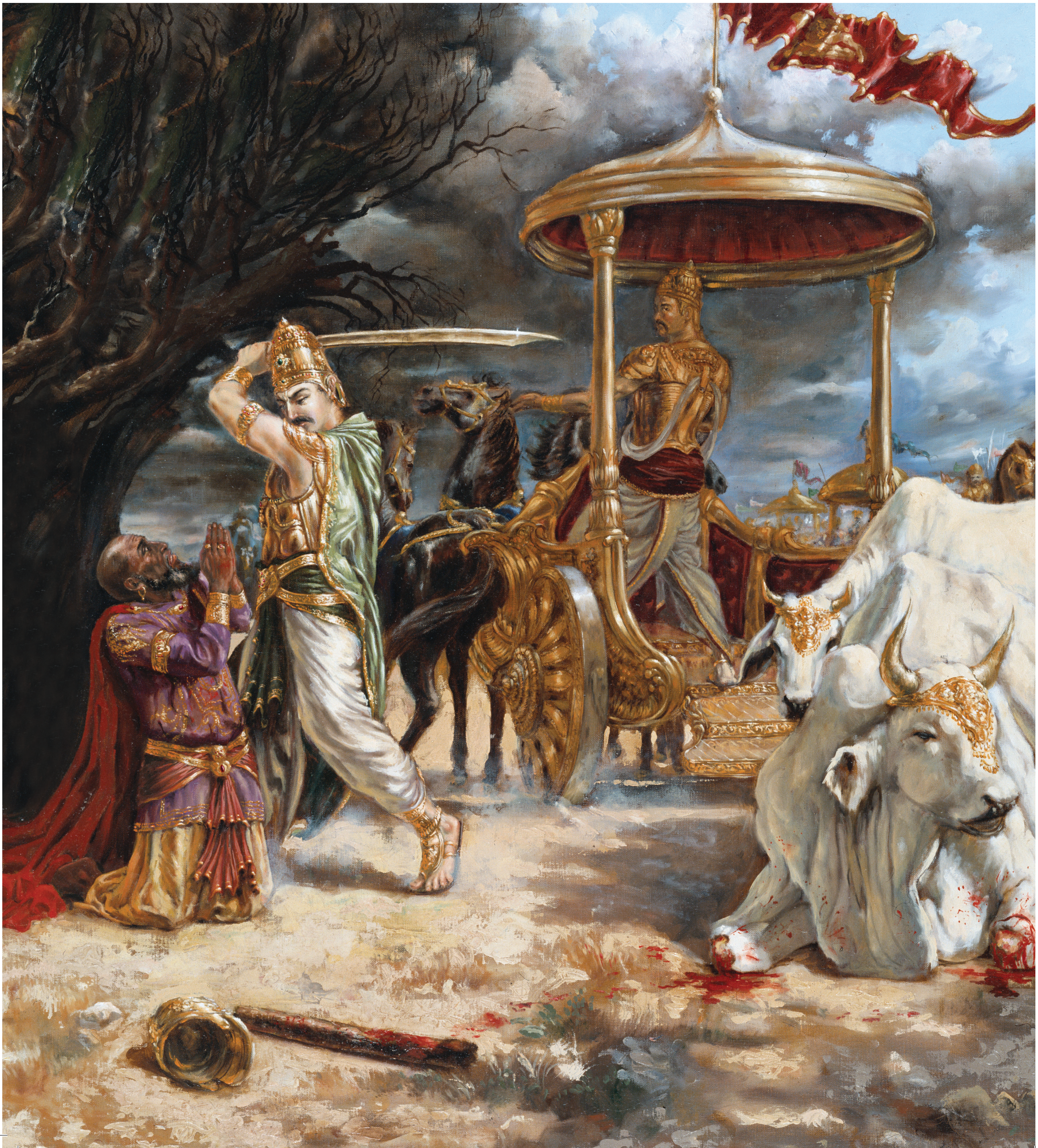
FOUNDER'S LECTURE

Vrindavan, India – September 8, 1975

The Need

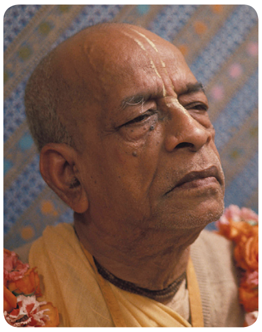


for Ideal Leaders

A small percentage of
exemplary Kṛṣṇa conscious persons
can benefit the whole world.

by His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society
For Krishna Consciousness



yad yad ācarati śreyān
itaras tat tad ihat sa
yat pramāṇaṁ kurute
lokas tad anuvartate

"The mass of people follow the example of a leader in society and imitate his behavior. They accept as evidence whatever the leader accepts."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.2.4

THIS IS A VERY important verse. An ideal class of men is needed in society. Therefore Vedic society is divided into *brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas,* and *śūdras.* The ideal class of men includes the *brāhmaṇas,* the saintly persons, the *sannyāsīs,* and the *rājarṣis,* or saintly kings. They are required. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.2) it is said that the *Bhagavad-gītā* was taught to the *rājarṣis,* not to the third-class men. *Imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ. Rājarṣi* means *rāja* and *ṛṣi* at the same time. Although *rāja,* or kings, they were saintly kings, like Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhagavān Rāmacandra, both ideal kings.

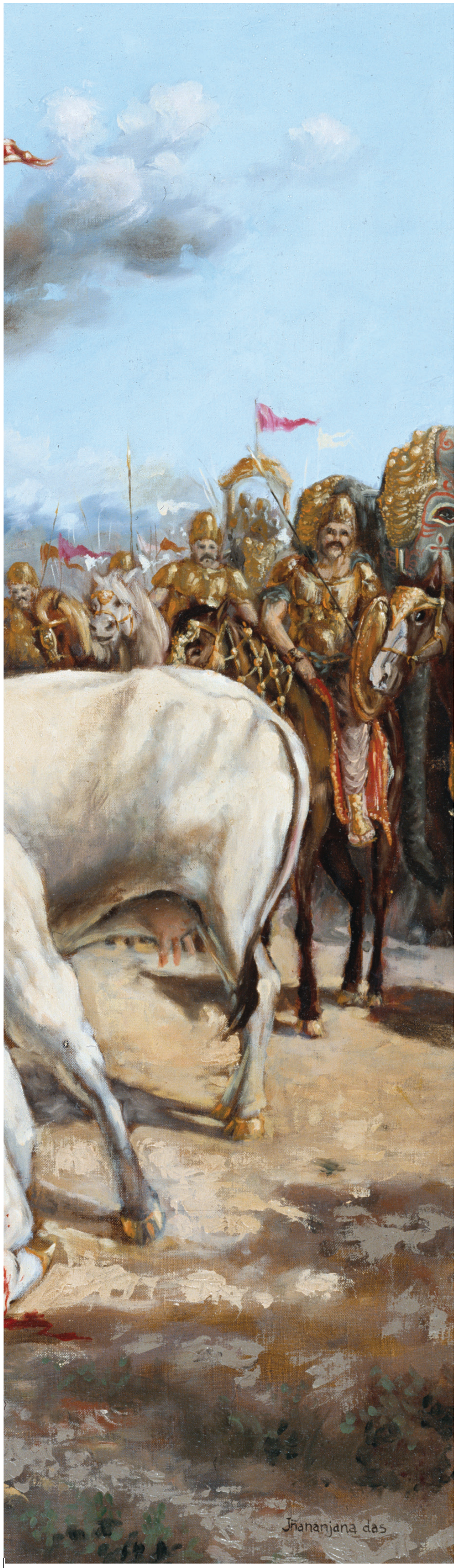
In the ancient Vedic culture a husband would reject his wife if she had been with another man. After Lord Rāmacandra killed Rāvaṇa, who had kidnapped His wife, He overheard a citizen criticizing Him for welcoming her back. Even though the criticizer was a low-class man, Lord Rāmacandra thought, "My citizens are criticizing Me," and He immediately separated from Sītā. This is the example of the ideal king: no criticism from a citizen, even if one is Lord Rāmacandra. That is the character of the *rājarṣi.*

Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and his grandson Mahārāja Parīkṣit were also *rājarṣis*. When Parīkṣit Mahārāja was emperor of the world, he was touring his kingdom when he saw a man trying to kill a cow. Immediately he took action: "Who is this man trying to kill a cow?"

Parīkṣit was going to kill him, but the man saved himself by saying, "This is my time. I am Kali-yuga. I am the representative of this age. This is my business – to kill cows. So what can I do?"

Parīkṣit said, "You better get out. Otherwise I shall kill you."

"Where shall I go?"



Painting by Jñānāñjana Dāsa

Five thousand years ago, Parīkṣit Mahārāja, an exemplary king, was ready to kill Kali, the personification of the current degraded age, for beating the legs of a cow.

"Out of my kingdom."

"Where is it not your kingdom? The whole world is your kingdom. Where shall I go? I am also your subject. You must give me a place."

Then he gave him the places for his residence. *Dyūtaṁ pānaṁ striyaḥ sūnā yatrādharmaś catur-vidhaḥ:* "You can remain in four places – where there is illicit sex or prostitution, where there is unnecessary killing of animals, as in slaughterhouses, where there is intoxication, and where there is gambling." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.17.38).

It was very difficult for Kali to find out such places because in Mahārāja Parīkṣit's time the kingdom was so nice that there was no brothel, no slaughterhouse, no liquor shop, and no gambling club. Because he was a *rājarṣi,* you could not find these things. Therefore Kali made a conspiracy to get Mahārāja Parīkṣit out so that Kali could spread his influence. As long Mahārāja Parīkṣit was there, there was no influence of Kali-yuga. So after all, the age has come. It is ordained. Parīkṣit Mahārāja was cursed by a *brāhmaṇa* to die within seven days, and after his death Kali-yuga spread its influence. And now, by the advancement of the age, you will find these four places in every home. Illicit sex, intoxication, gambling, and meat-eating – these are Kali-yuga.

The leaders are all rogues and thieves, in a very fallen condition. Therefore people are deteriorating.

The kings were very strict not to allow these things, and the people were following the king. *Yad yad ācarati śreyān.* The king was strict. The government was strict. Therefore people were following.

The sinful activities of the whole world can be stopped immediately if the government is strong. But the government members are themselves victims of Kali-yuga, so how can they stop the sinful activities? Some big, big politicians, when they enjoy they bring naked girls and drinking, and this is their standard of enjoyment. So how can you expect good government? It is not possible. Why should they bother about people's happiness? They want to occupy a big, big ministerial post to enjoy life.

The position of the whole world is deteriorated because there is no ideal man. The leaders are all rogues and thieves, in a very fallen condition. Therefore people are deteriorating.

Symptoms of This Age

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* lists the symptoms of Kali-yuga. For example: *dāmpatye 'bhirucir hetuḥ* (*Bhāg.* 12.2.3). *Dāmpata* means husband and wife. Their relation will stand as long as they satisfy one another by sex, *rati.* As soon as there is some disturbance in their sex life, they will divorce. "I don't want you." *Vipratve sūtram eva hi:* "Without any qualification, anyone who wears the two-cent thread worn by *brāhmaṇas* will be considered a *brāhmaṇa.*" Similarly, any unqualified person who carries the *sannyāsa* rod will be considered a real *sannyāsī.* These are some of the symptoms of the age.

Dākṣyaṁ kuṭumba-bharaṇam: If anyone can maintain a family – a wife and one or two children – then he is to be considered very expert and successful. Therefore you will find in these days that a man has no wife, no children, no family. In Western countries they take their dog as their best friend – and television. That's all, because this is Kali-yuga. A man has no family, but he must have some companion. But he doesn't want a family, doesn't want the botheration of a family. So his dog is his best friend. What can be done. This is going on, and it will increase more and more, more and more.

Therefore, at the present moment there is a great necessity to have some ideal men. *Yad yad ācarati śreyān.* We are endeavoring to create some ideal men, Kṛṣṇa conscious men who are ideal in their character, their behavior, their aim of life. Those who have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously should be ideal men. Just by seeing their behavior society will be benefited.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu has taught us, *āpani ācari, prabhu jīvere śikhāya.* If you don't behave as an ideal man, you cannot preach. Your preaching will not be successful, because nature's law is that ordinary men follow the ideal. People will be happy if there is a *rājarṣi* – a *kṣatriya,* ruler, king who is just like a saintly person, like Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, Parīkṣit, Lord Rāmacandra, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. During the reign of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira there was no trouble at all for the citizens. They were free from even ordinary minor diseases. That is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* And as far as production was concerned, it is said that the land was producing all the necessities: *sarva-kāma-dughā mahī* (*Bhāg.* 1.10.4).

Why Nature Restricts Her Supply

Actually we get everything from the earth, all supplies. We are getting these flowers from the earth, we are getting these fruits from the earth, we are getting foodstuff from the earth, we are getting minerals from the earth – everything. Nature will supply you sufficiently, provided you follow the ideal life. Otherwise nature will punish you. There will be no supply.

This is described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* Nature was not supplying sufficiently, so Mahārāja Pṛthu was going to punish the earth personified, Pṛthvī. If somebody is doing wrong, then the king must punish. So he was prepared to punish Pṛthvī.

She submitted, "King, why are you trying to punish me? It is my business to restrict my supply when people become demons."

That is nature's law. As soon as you become demons, godless, nature will restrict her supply. There will be no rain, no production. There will be scarcity.

Everything is being carried out by *prakṛti,* nature, and *prakṛti* is working under the direction of Kṛṣṇa. *Mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram* (*Gītā* 9.10). Without *prakṛti's* cooperation you cannot get anything. You may have big, big mills and factories, but they will be useless. You cannot manufacture rice, grains. Even if you eat meat, the cows and the other animals must eat vegetables. There will be no vegetables. How will you be able to eat meat even? Nature has the power to restrict. As you become more and more demoniac and sinful, nature will restrict her supply, and you'll suffer. That is the law.

Therefore our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for teaching people how to become Kṛṣṇa conscious and surrender unto Kṛṣṇa. Then they will be happy. That is the way of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We want to create some ideal men. People will see them, and at least they will understand "Here are the ideal men." They will be ashamed of their own behavior.

Those who are in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should be *śreyān,* the best men in society. Otherwise if you waste your time to make the temple a free hotel and sleep, that is useless. If you take advantage of the free hotel and do no work, that will not make our mission successful. We must be *śreyān,* first-class men.

That is wanted because there are no first-class men. They are all fourth class and fifth class. It is said, *kalau śūdrā-sambhavāḥ:* In Kali-yuga everyone is a *śūdrā. Śūdra* means fourth-class men, and *caṇḍāla* means fifth-class men. Nowadays they are mainly *caṇḍālas.* By the grace of Caitanya Mahāprabhu this movement is able to pick up even *caṇḍālas* and turn them into *brāhmaṇas.*

māṁ ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatītyaitān
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate

"One who is engaged in devotional service becomes immediately transcendental to the infection of the three qualities of material nature." (*Gītā* 14.26) That is actually happening. This powerful Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is so strong that we can pick people up from the lowest stage of life and bring them to the highest stage of life if they follow the rules and regulations. It is possible. We are seeing this.

A class of ideal men is needed. They may be in the minority; it doesn't matter. But their ideal behavior, character, will lead other people to appreciate: "Yes. We should be like this."

Praṇava was telling me that some friend has told him that in the Western countries people are appreciating this movement because I have stopped intoxication amongst our members. Professor Judah also says that. They are appreciating now: "It is a nice movement. Our students were habituated to all these bad things, and they have now become God conscious. They are mad after God." A priest in Boston came to see me. He said, "Swamiji, how is it that your disciples look so bright?" They are appreciating. This is wanted – that everyone in this movement become *śreyān,* first class.

This movement is very important because it is creating first-class men so that others will see them and follow their example. That is natural. A father may be a drunkard, but he doesn't like to see his son become a drunkard. Everyone appreciates good qualities. So if we can create an ideal class of men, then others who are fallen will try to become like us.

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

Become Ideal

Don’t take this movement as something insignificant. It is very serious. Those who are members should become ideal. We have got a very easy method to become ideal: Avoid these four principles of sinful life – meat-eating, illicit sex, intoxication, and gambling – and chant sixteen rounds of Hare Kṛṣṇa on your beads. Then you will become ideal.

The first step to becoming ideal is *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam:* cleansing the heart. We are all suffering on account of ignorance. There are so many nasty, dirty things within our heart. They will be cleansed by the process we are prescribing.

We also progress by hearing from the *bhāgavatas.* There are two *bhāgavatas.* One is the *grantha-bhāgavata,* which means the book *bhāgavata,* especially the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* The other is the person *bhāgavata,* the Kṛṣṇa conscious person who exemplifies the teachings of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

> There are so many nasty, dirty things within our heart. They will be cleansed by the process we are prescribing.

Svarūpa Dāmodara, Lord Caitanya’s secretary, taught, “Hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from a person whose life is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*” Don’t hear from the professionals who speak on the *Bhāgavatam* for their livelihood. They immediately open the *rāsa-līlā* chapter and people think, “Oh, Kṛṣṇa and I are the same. He is embracing a young girl. I shall now try to find a young girl.” This is going on. People are going to hell by hearing the *Bhāgavatam* from these rascal professionals.

The *Bhāgavatam* takes nine cantos to explain what God is. Then we are prepared to hear about Kṛṣṇa in the Tenth Canto. We should not jump to the Tenth Canto immediately.

Now everything is misused only for money, money, money. “Bring money.” This is Kali-yuga. Everything will be judged by money. And as soon as there is money there will be *hiṁsa,* violence. Therefore the *Bhāgavatam* is not for this class of men – the professional *Bhāgavatam* reciters. It is for those who are above enviousness, who are above hankering after money.

We should be very, very careful to become first-class men so that others will follow. If you become a first-class man, whatever you do (*sa yat pramāṇam*), people will follow naturally (*lokas tad anuvartate*).

Unfortunately nowadays “first-class man” means one who wants to kill Kṛṣṇa. The only business of all these so-called scholars of *Bhagavad-gītā* is how to kill Kṛṣṇa, as Kaṁsa was planning how to kill Kṛṣṇa. That was his plan. He was a demon. He was thinking of Kṛṣṇa, but he was thinking how to kill Him. That is not *bhakti.* He was Kṛṣṇa conscious. He was always thinking about Kṛṣṇa. Twenty-four hours a day he was thinking how to kill Kṛṣṇa. That is not *bhakti. Bhakti* means thinking how to serve Kṛṣṇa. That is *bhakti.* Not *pratikūla,* or adverse thinking.

Of course, Kṛṣṇa is so nice that even if you think of Kṛṣṇa adversely, because you’ll chant “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa” you will get some benefit. Kṛṣṇa is so nice. In Germany there was propaganda that “The Hare Kṛṣṇa people are so bad.” But every paper chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa. “The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is bad.” So therefore, in spite of their propaganda we are existing there. We have come out triumphant. They could not do anything.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is so strong that indirectly, directly, or some way or other if you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa you will be benefited. It is so. If you become benefited by neglectfully chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, then how much you will be benefited if you carefully chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. That should be the ideal.

Unfortunately, those decrying this Kṛṣṇa movement are directly making propaganda. When Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru* – “Think of Me, become My devotee, bow down to Me” – the so-called scholars say, “It is not Kṛṣṇa to whom you should do these things.” They’re misleading people. People are becoming against Kṛṣṇa: “Why should Kṛṣṇa be God? I have got another God, whom I’ve manufactured. Here is God.”

Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful, but they say, “I am God.” Such an ugly person is God? No. There are so many ugly “Gods” nowadays. That ferocious face and he is God? We worship God who has such a nice face that people come and become enchanted, and others bring someone with a ferocious head, and he becomes God.

This is going on. The whole propaganda is like that. Even big, big political leaders say, “We don’t believe in Kṛṣṇa. We don’t believe that Kṛṣṇa as a living person ever existed.” People are being misled. Someone has taken the position of *śreyān* – big leader, big scholar – and he is decrying Kṛṣṇa. So what will people do? They are helpless. They will say, “Oh, Mr. Such-and-Such said it is fiction. Kṛṣṇa is imagination.” This is going on.

In Vrindavan you’ll find so many big, big Māyāvādīs, impersonalists. They’re explaining that this Kṛṣṇa concept is an imagination, and people throng together to hear them – in Vrindavan, and what to speak of other places.

This is the position of the world. People are suffering, and they will continue to suffer. Nature will punish them. Yamarāja, who punishes the sinful after death, will take them. That is their next life. Try to save them. That is the purpose of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

Thank you very much.

Glossary

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Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as *Gītā*.)

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasāda—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion.

Purāṇas—Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śāstra—scriptures, especially the Vedic scriptures of India.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. (Cited as *Bhāg.*)

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

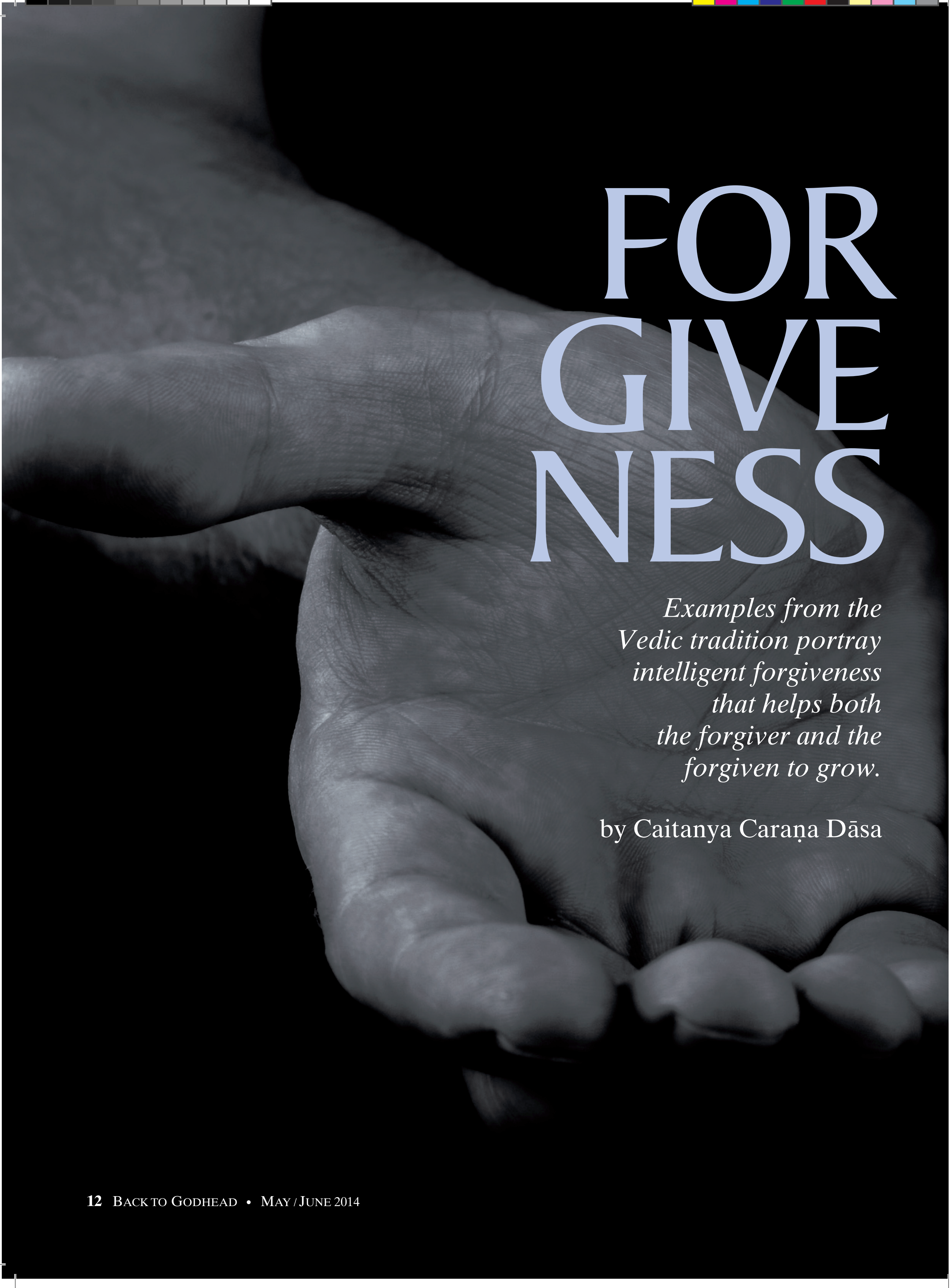
Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.



FOR GIVE NESS

Examples from the Vedic tradition portray intelligent forgiveness that helps both the forgiver and the forgiven to grow.

by Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

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WHEN SOMEONE hurts us, should we forgive or retaliate? All of us are likely to have pondered this question, as have thinkers throughout history. The great spiritual-wisdom traditions of the world often exalt forgiveness as a glorious virtue, indispensable for authentic spiritual growth. Even our contemporary culture acknowledges the value of forgiving; a Gallup poll conducted in 1988 found that 94% of Americans felt that forgiving was important. At the same time, 85% of Americans felt the need for guidance about how to forgive. Where can we turn for such guidance? The time-honored Vedic tradition offers principles and examples that can help us.

Why Forgive?

In an illuminating passage on forgiveness in the *Udyoga Parva* of the *Mahābhārata,* Vidura informs Dhṛtarāṣṭra, "An unforgiving person defiles himself with many evils." Modern science may have discovered some of these defiling evils: the psychological and physiological harms resulting from an unforgiving attitude. Many books, such as *Learning to Forgive,* by Stanford University researcher Dr. Fred Ruskin, list multiple studies which consistently report that forgiving is good for our health. Conversely, less-forgiving people tend to develop more health complications. When we refuse to forgive a wrongdoing, we continually resent the past and so stay mentally stuck in it. Consequently, our thoughts, words, actions, and even lives may become resentment-driven, causing us to either clam up or blow up. When we clam up, we drive our anger deep within, inflicting ugly scars on our psyches that may distort our personality. When we blow up, we drive our anger outward not just to the wrongdoer, but to whoever crosses our way at the time of blowing up, creating a public image of ourselves as irritable. Thus both resentment-driven responses – clamming up and blowing up – are unproductive, if not counterproductive. So, at least for our own mental and physical health, to forgive and thereby free ourselves from negative emotions is beneficial.

> **A broadened perspective enables us to see the offender not as the origin of our suffering but as the vehicle.**

Enhancing our vision with Vedic insights about the law of karma can make forgiving easier. These insights help us understand that if someone seems to have hurt us for no reason, that hurt is probably a reaction for our having similarly hurt someone in the past. This broadened perspective enables us to see the offender not as the origin of our suffering but as the vehicle; the origin is our own past behavior. Underscoring this philosophically informed vision, Śrīla Prabhupāda recommends that we eschew becoming angry with "the instruments of our karma." If we remain angry, that internal feeling will, sooner or later, impel us to bad actions that will further defile us.

Even when our indignant feelings make digesting the logic of karma difficult, forgiveness still retains its potential to free us from resentment. That's why in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.3), Lord Kṛṣṇa declares forgiveness to be a godly quality conducive to liberation and contrasts it with the anger and harshness that characterize the ungodly and keep them in karmic bondage.

What if History Repeats Itself?

Of course, in real-life situations wherein we have to decide if and how to forgive, we are concerned not just with health and karma, but also with our relationship with the offending person. Before proceeding to the topic of forgiveness, a caveat is required. Indiscretions by both parties stimulate most relationship conflicts, and we need to honestly introspect to check what wrong we ourselves might have done and how we can correct it. As my topic is forgiveness, I will focus on dealing with situations wherein we have reasonably ascertained that the fault is primarily with the other person and so can decide whether to forgive or not.

Offenses hurt the most when they come from those with whom we have a close relationship. Because close relationships bring with them high mutual expectations, forgiving someone who has let us down is particularly difficult. A typical knee-jerk reaction to offensive behavior is retaliation, but that will probably worsen the situation and the relationship. Especially when the relationship is important to us, trying to preserve it by forgiving is well worth the effort.

When forgiving a wrongdoer, a valid concern is the recurrence of the wrongdoing: "What if the offending person takes my forgiveness as a license for continuing the offense?" In an earlier part of the above *Mahābhārata* reference, Vidura addresses this concern: "There is only one defect in forgiving persons, and not another; that defect is that people take a forgiving person to be weak. That defect, however, should not be taken into consideration, for forgiveness is a great power." To understand why Vidura admits that the forgiver may be seen as weak and then, in almost the same breath, calls forgiveness "a great power," let's look at Vidura's own conduct in the *Mahābhārata.*

Vidura repeatedly counseled his elder brother and king of the Kuru dynasty Dhṛtarāṣṭra to choose morality over nepotism: to not abandon his duty to protect his nephews the Pāṇḍavas from the evil schemes hatched by his son Duryodhana, who wanted to deny them their right to the kingdom. Unfortunately, the king, due to his attachment to Duryodhana, tacitly sanctioned his nefarious schemes to destroy the Pāṇḍavas. After the Pāṇḍavas had been dispossessed and exiled in a rigged gambling match, Vidura's beneficial but unpalatable pronouncements about the vicious nature of Duryodhana and its dire consequences became intolerable to the attached Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who censured and rejected his well-wishing younger brother. However, the king soon returned to his senses and sent his secretary, Sañjaya, to seek forgiveness from Vidura and to call him back. Vidura returned and forgave Dhṛtarāṣṭra, but didn't forget the king's nepotistic tendencies and so kept his eyes and ears constantly open. By not naively trusting Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Vidura was able to keep track of further recurrences of nepotism and help protect the Pāṇḍavas from future dangers. At the same time, by not being resentful about the past insult, he was able to maintain a congenial relationship with Dhṛtarāṣṭra. On the strength of this relationship, Vidura eventually helped the king see the futility and folly of his material attachments and inspired him to take up the path to enlightenment.

Vidura's conduct shows an aspect of "the great power" latent in forgiveness: the power to improve a person or a relationship in a situation where otherwise improvement would be near impossible. To access and use this power, we need to discern the subtle but crucial difference between forgiving and trusting. Oxforddictionaries.com defines "forgive" as to "stop feeling angry or resentful towards (someone) for an offence, flaw, or mistake," and defines "trust" as "firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something." Leaving aside the context-specific nuances of these words, we can get a good sense of their essential thrust from the above generic meanings: forgiveness is for the past; trust is for the future.

Vidura's conduct shows how we may forgive without trusting. If we don't forgive, then neither the other person nor the relationship has much chance of improving. If we forgive and trust the other person, we may unintentionally create the perception of being weak and open ourselves to further hurts. Forgiving a person certainly doesn't mean that we let the other person continue the hurting behavior; that would be masochism, and there's nothing laudable or spiritual about masochism. At the same time, it needs to be stressed that there's nothing intrinsically laudable or spiritual about taking revenge either. So, we need to find that balanced course of action which allows the past to go so as to give the future a chance to come in.

Forgiving without trusting is such a middle way; it enables us to hold the door open for the other person to improve without letting ourselves be trampled in the process. Conveying our forgiveness helps the person avoid the pitfall of self-justification, and holding back our trust avoids the pitfall of the person's remaining oblivious of the past wrongdoing. This approach ensures that we don't end a relationship when it could be restored. After all, we too are fallible human beings like the offender; we too may err tomorrow and be in need of forgiveness. Wouldn't we want a similar chance to improve ourselves when we happened to do a wrong? If the wrongdoer demonstrates reformed behavior consistently over time, then we can forget along with forgiving and restore the relationship to the earlier level of trust.

Balancing Forgiveness And Punishmnent

Of course, the possibility remains that the other person may not always walk through the door for improvement held open by us. These will be the sad times when we may need to shut the door, but forgiving without trusting initially ensures that we don't shut the door prematurely.

A relevant scriptural example is from the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the dealings of King Vasudeva, the father of Lord Kṛṣṇa, with the demoniac tyrant Kaṁsa, who had killed Vasudeva's first six sons. When an unexpected turn of events caused the tyrant to have an apparent change of heart, he sought forgiveness from Vasudeva for past atrocities. Vasudeva promptly forgave Kaṁsa, but didn't naively trust him and divulge Kṛṣṇa's whereabouts; in fact, Vasudeva cautiously and tactfully did everything possible to keep Kṛṣṇa's whereabouts hidden from Kaṁsa. It soon became evident that Kaṁsa's change of heart had been only momentary; he relapsed into his past malevolence by re-imprisoning Vasudeva and by repeatedly sending deadly demons to kill Kṛṣṇa. Thereupon Lord Kṛṣṇa, noting the demonstrated incorrigibility of Kaṁsa and the need to protect the innocent from his viciousness, chose the necessary punitive measure of killing Kaṁsa. This capital punishment freed the real Kaṁsa – the soul – from the vengeful mentality inherent in his material body, thereby enabling the purified soul to progress on the spiritual journey.

Thus, the principle of justice needs to counterbalance the principle of forgiveness; if offenses escalate to a criminal level, initiating disciplinary action may be the only viable and essential option left for

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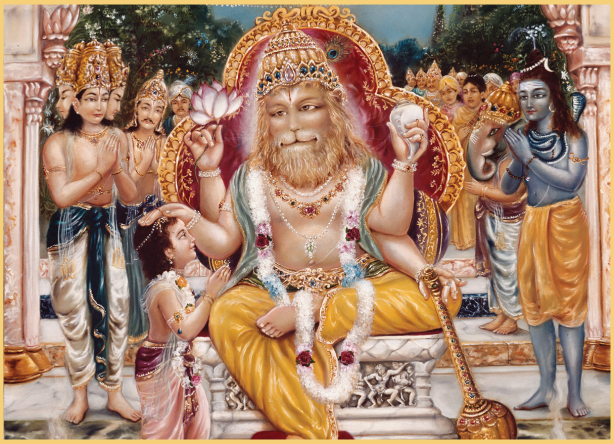
*If you live outside the USA, check the estate tax laws for your country.

A Pause for Prayer

I OFFER MY respectful obeisances unto Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, the source of all power. O my Lord who possesses nails and teeth just like thunderbolts, kindly vanquish our demonlike desires for fruitive activity in this material world. Please appear in our hearts and drive away our ignorance so that by Your mercy we may become fearless in the struggle for existence in this material world.

May there be good fortune throughout the universe, and may all envious persons be pacified. May all living entities become calm by practicing *bhakti-yoga,* for by accepting devotional service they will think of each other's welfare. Therefore let us all engage in the service of the supreme transcendence, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him.

Prayers offered by Prahlāda
Mahārāja and the residents of Hari-varṣa
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.18.8–9)



Detail from a painting by Caruhāsa Dāsa

Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva – Appearance Day: May 13

us. However, even punishing can be done without the negative emotions of resentment or vengefulness, as is illustrated in the conduct of Lord Rāma in the *Yuddha-khaṇḍa* of the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa.*

When the demon Rāvaṇa abducted Sītā, the consort of Lord Rāma, the Lord offered to forgive the demon's grievous misdeed if he just reformed and returned Sītā. When Rāvaṇa scornfully rejected Rāma's magnanimous offer, Lord Rāma had to do the needful to punish and slay Rāvaṇa. Although Lord Rāma killed Rāvaṇa, He bore no hatred for Rāvaṇa, as became evident in His arranging for the demon's proper funeral ceremony. After Rāvaṇa's death, his younger brother Vibhīṣaṇa had been initially unwilling to perform the last rites for a person who had committed so many lusty atrocities. But Lord Rāma revealed His compassionate heart when He instructed Vibhīṣaṇa, "No disdain should ever be felt for the soul. Once a person is dead, the soul leaves the body and proceeds to the next life. Rāvaṇa's sinful body is now dead, but his pure soul continues to live. The soul is always worthy of respect. You should therefore carry out the rites for the eternal good of your brother's immortal soul."

Thus Lord Rāma revealed His loving concern for Rāvaṇa's spiritual well-being; however, His concern for the many victims of Rāvaṇa's atrocities balanced His concern for Rāvaṇa. Because Rāvaṇa had shown no inclinations to reform his exploitative devilish ways despite repeated warnings and opportunities, the Lord took the necessary disciplinary action against him – but without hatred. Similarly, even when we choose to take disciplinary action, we can do so not with anger or hatred for the offender, but with concern that the offender should be stopped from hurting others and saved from incurring further bad karma.

Individualized Application

How does all this apply to us today? Each of us is different, each of our relationships is different, and each situation is different. This article outlines general principles for problem-solving, not specific solutions, which will differ in each situation. Overall, thoughtfulness, maturity, and sensitivity are indispensable while applying general principles to our specific circumstances. Often we will need to seek guidance from Kṛṣṇa internally through prayerful contemplation and externally through honest discussions with devotee guides and counselors. Kṛṣṇa assures us in the *Gītā* (10.10) that He gives those who serve Him lovingly the intelligence by which they can return to Him. So, if we turn to Him for guidance, He will help us choose the best course of action for our specific situation.

Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami. He holds a degree in electronic and telecommunications engineering and serves full time at ISKCON Pune. He is the author of eleven books. To read his other articles or to receive his daily reflection on the Bhagavad-gītā, *"Gita-daily," visit thespiritualscientist.com.*

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to ***www.krishnadays.com****.*

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

Month of Madhusūdana

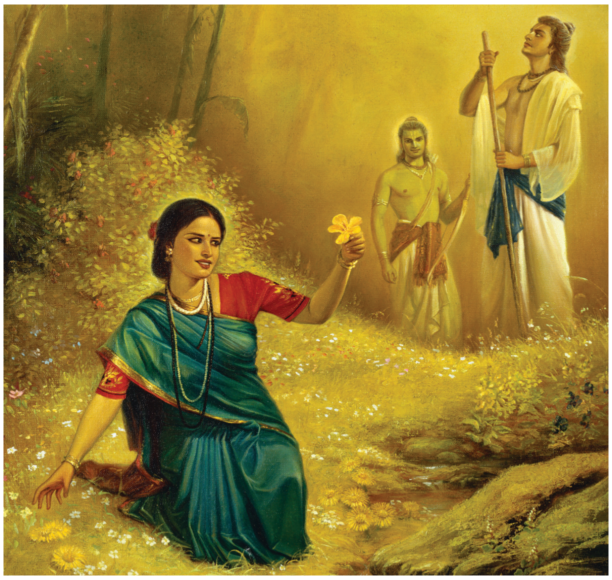
(*April 16–May 14*)

MAY

2 – Beginning of Candana Yātrā, the festival of anointing the temple deity with sandalwood pulp for twenty-one days.

8 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Lord Rāmacandra. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī, the consort of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhu Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

10 – Mohinī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.



Detail from a painting by Caruhāsa Dāsa

Śrīmatī Sītā Devī

11 – Rukmiṇī Dvādaśī, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī Devī, the consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Dvārakādhīśa, the Lord of Dvārakā.

12 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayānanda Prabhu, a dedicated disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda who helped him bring the Rathayātrā festival to the Western world.

13 – Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation. Fasting till dusk, followed by feasting.

14 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a follower of the Six Gosvāmīs. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master (Īśvara Purī).

Month of Trivikrama

(*May 15–June 13*)

19 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

24 – **Aparā Ekādaśī**
Fasting from grains and beans.

25 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata,* a biography on Lord Caitanya.

JUNE

8 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a prominent spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* (disciplic succession), and the author of *Govinda-bhāṣya,* an important commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra.* Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāmiṇī, a prominent female spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya.*

9 – Pāṇḍava Nirjalā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Vāmana

(*June 14–July 12*)

14 – Disappearance of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, one of the principal followers of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vrindavan.

22 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya.

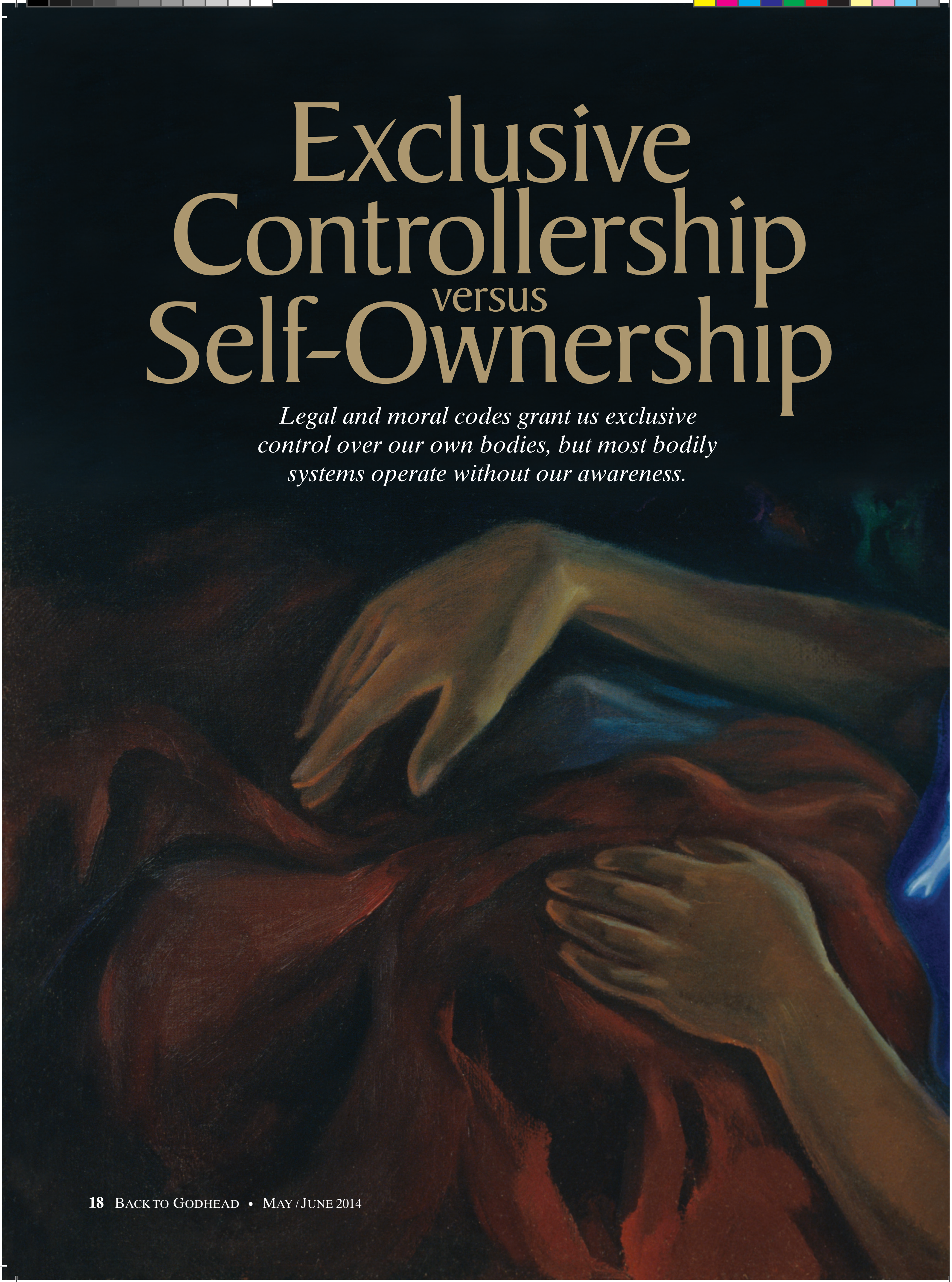
23 – **Yoginī Ekādaśī**
Fasting from grains and beans.

27 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

29 – Lord Jagannātha's Rathayātrā in Jagannatha Puri. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrīla Śivānanda Sena, intimate associates of Lord Caitanya.

Exclusive Controllership versus Self-Ownership

Legal and moral codes grant us exclusive control over our own bodies, but most bodily systems operate without our awareness.

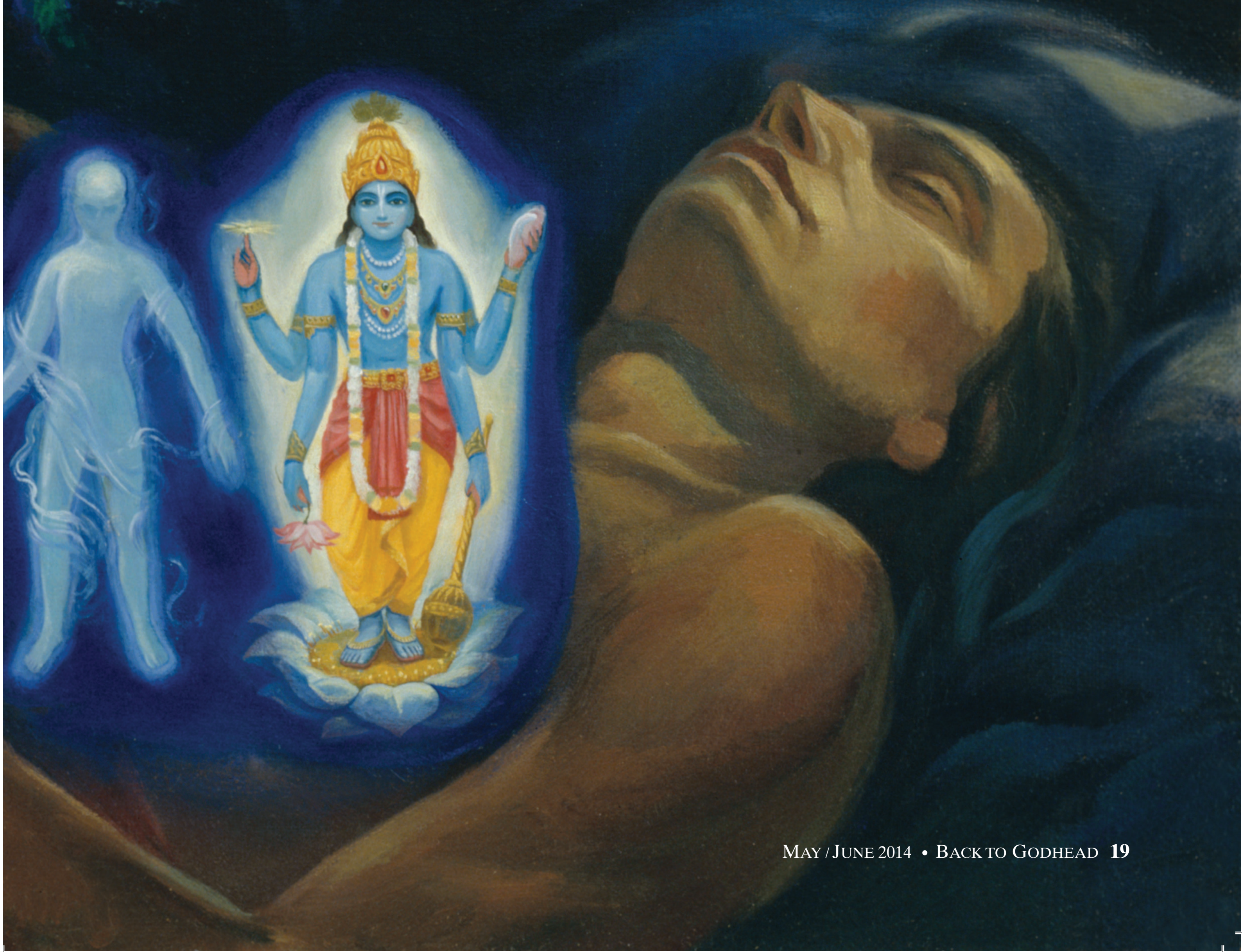


by Dr. Aswini Kumar Misro

SELF-OWNERSHIP is an exclusive right enjoyed by every individual in a democratic country. Otherwise known as individual sovereignty or individual autonomy, self-ownership is the moral right of a person to be the exclusive controller of his or her own body and life.

From a legal and ethical point of view, individual autonomy is more important than doing good to others. For example, legal and moral obligations forbid a physician to treat and cure patients with curable cancer who don't want any treatment. Treatment without a patient's explicit consent, even though done with good intentions, is considered battery. A surgeon operating on a patient with right ovarian cancer who finds a left ovarian cancer cannot treat the left side surgically without the patient's prior consent and permission. The doctor has to bring the patient out of anesthesia and discuss the findings. These examples show how important individual autonomy is in health affairs. The law treats the individual as the body's "owner," "proprietor," and "exclusive controller."

Our daily experience of control over our musculoskeletal system reinforces in our minds the concept of our exclusive controllership on



Although the individual self, or soul, is conscious of the body, Lord Kṛṣṇa in His form as the Supersoul keeps the body running.

the material platform. To exemplify, if I want to write something, the effector organ, the hand, executes my wish. No one in this world can make me write or prevent me from writing until I wish to do so. The combined effect of the law of the state and our day-to-day experiences consolidates within our mind the concept of exclusive controllership so strongly that we are unable to see the holistic view of reality even though it is not very difficult to understand. Let's look at how much we really own and control our body, in light of logic, scientific knowledge, and Vedic literature.

Involuntary Activities

The body's nervous system, nourished by blood vessels, is a network that connects to various organs and tissues. The nerves control the organs, which mediate actions. There are two kinds of nerves in our body. The first type, of the somatic nervous system, enables us to voluntarily control activities like walking, dancing, weight lifting, and so on. The second type, of the autonomic nervous system, controls the involuntary activities, which run without our awareness, including respiration, heartbeat, digestion, and assimilation. The autonomic nervous system delicately manages most functions other than the musculoskeletal system and a few other structures. Even when we are deep asleep, our heart keeps beating, kidneys keep filtering, bowels keep digesting, and lungs keep oxygenating blood and eliminating waste gases from our body. Therefore, what to speak of being the total controller, we are not even aware of all the activities happening inside the body at every moment.

Consider what would happen if we had to consciously control all of our bodily activities. A person with Ondine's Curse Syndrome (also known as Congenital Central Hypoventilation Syndrome) is cursed with voluntary control over the respiratory system. People with this condition have to stay awake to breathe by their own conscious effort. If they go to sleep, they go into respiratory arrest. Or if they simply forget to breathe, they develop symptoms arising from a lack of oxygen in the blood. Since this is a lifelong condition, patients require mechanical breathing support to ventilate their lungs, especially when they are asleep. Medication plays a very limited role.

How can we claim to be the "exclusive controller" if we are not even cognizant of involuntary activities happening in the body? Who is controlling, coordinating, and supervising these activities, vital to our sustenance? Who determines the rhythm of the heart, the rate of respiration, or the temperature of the body? Who stimulates the tissues to heal a wound or an ulcer? Who directs the immune system to destroy microbes? In other words, who understands what is required to fulfill the demands of a dynamic human body?

Atheists attribute the complex functioning of the human body to programs in our genetic material. We observe, however, that an intelligent operator consciously controls or supervises all the operations of every single machine in our experience. The genetic material, which is nothing but a bag of chemicals, cannot be the all-cognizant intelligent operator of the human body, an extremely intricate superstructure even at the microscopic level. If the bag of chemicals is the cause of all the vital processes in the body, why at the time of death is that bag of chemicals no longer able to maintain the physiology and

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spark of consciousness in the body? This challenge crushes the atheistic assumptions. Genetic material is not sufficient to sustain the vital functions. There has to be a super-intelligent operator who is not only cognizant of the human anatomy at the macroscopic and microscopic levels, but who also directs all the vital bodily functions and energizes the genetic programs coded in the bag of chemicals.

The Super-Intelligent Operator

The timeless teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* reveal this super-intelligent operator. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, "Yet in this body there is another, a transcendental enjoyer, who is the Lord, the supreme proprietor, who exists as the overseer and permitter, and who is known as the Supersoul." (*Gītā* 13.23) Even though as an individual soul we are the legal occupier and owner of the body, Kṛṣṇa in the form of the Supersoul supervises and maintains the life-sustaining autonomic bodily functions in a smooth, organized fashion in this splendidly engineered and programmed human body, thereby relieving the individual soul from having to stay conscious and awake all the time to look after his own body. In His form as the Supersoul, Kṛṣṇa charges the body with life and consciousness. The Supersoul has sanctioned the individual soul to enjoy the body without having to worry very much about its maintenance.

One may argue that we also maintain the body. For example, we eat to nourish it. But this argument does not hold true, since a hunger mechanism that is beyond our voluntary control regulates our food intake, including its frequency and volume. A system in our body directs us to eat as soon as the glucose level falls down. It also brings satiety when we have consumed enough. In fact, those who have a defect in the regulation of the hunger mechanism end up with any of several morbid diseases, like obesity. Hence, we cannot claim we are truly maintaining our body.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.29) Kṛṣṇa emphasizes the importance of understanding this concept: "One who sees the Supersoul equally present everywhere, in every living being, does not degrade himself by his mind. Thus, he approaches the transcendental destination." Thus Kṛṣṇa assures us that upon leaving the body at death, whoever has realized the truth of the Supersoul's control will return to the spiritual world, the abode of transcendental happiness, knowledge, and eternity, to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The Devotee's Realization

While enjoying the freedom to control the musculoskeletal system, the conditioned living being forgets his lack of control over ninety-five per cent of the bodily functions and thereby falsely assumes himself to be the exclusive controller of the body. He also forgets that for him to exercise the five percent control, the body needs to remain fit and functional. This is taken care of by the Supreme Being. Devotees realize the role of the Supreme Being behind our minute independence and hence dedicate all they have to Kṛṣṇa, as described in the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* (quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 23.23): "With their words, they offer prayers to the Lord. With their minds, they always remember the Lord. With their bodies, they offer obeisances to the Lord. Despite all these activities, they are still not satisfied. This is the nature of pure devotees. Shedding tears from their eyes, they dedicate their whole lives to the Lord's service."

Dr. Aswini Kumar Misro is a surgeon with National Health Services in London. He wishes to thank his wife, Radhika, and Raghupati Dāsa for their suggestions regarding this article.

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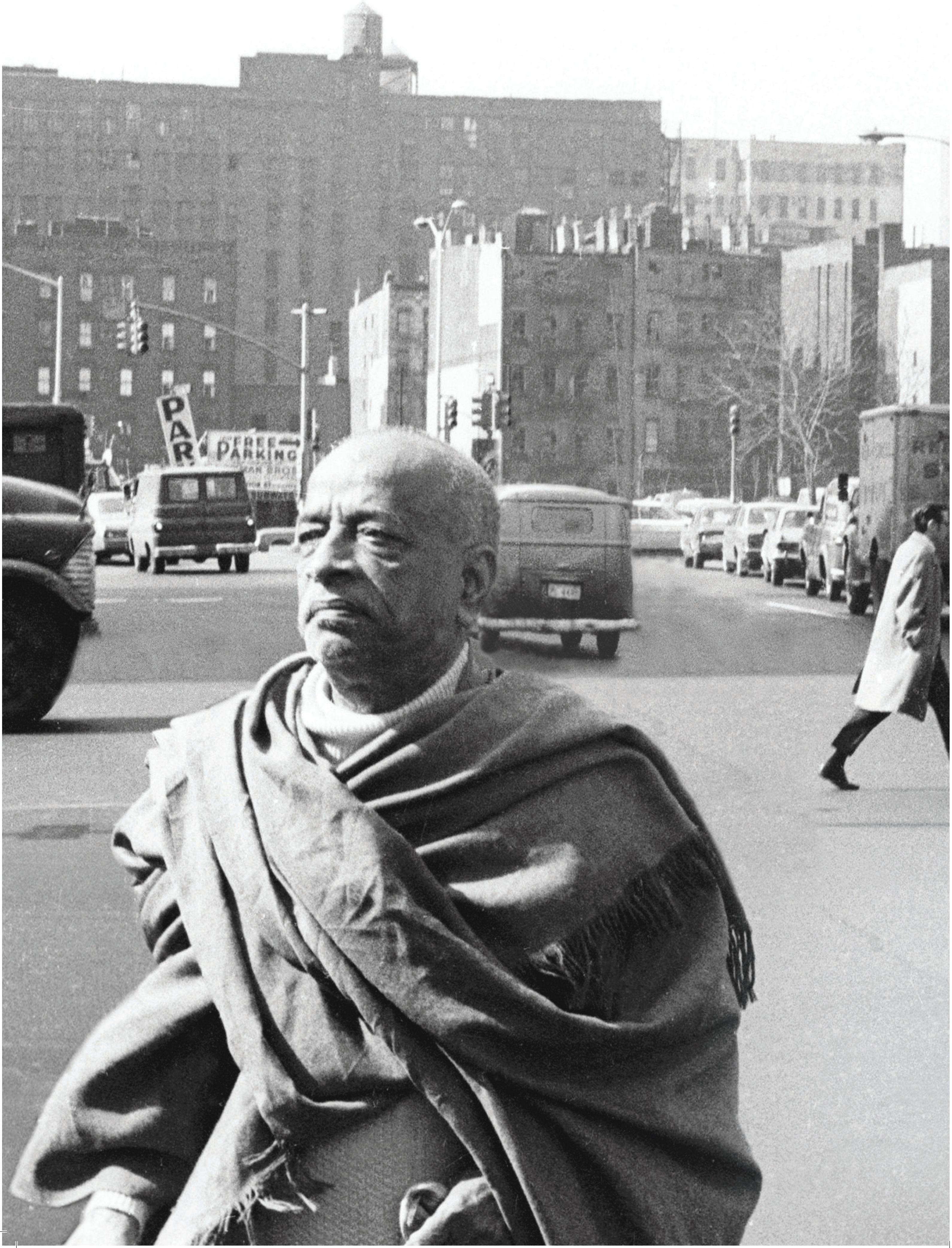
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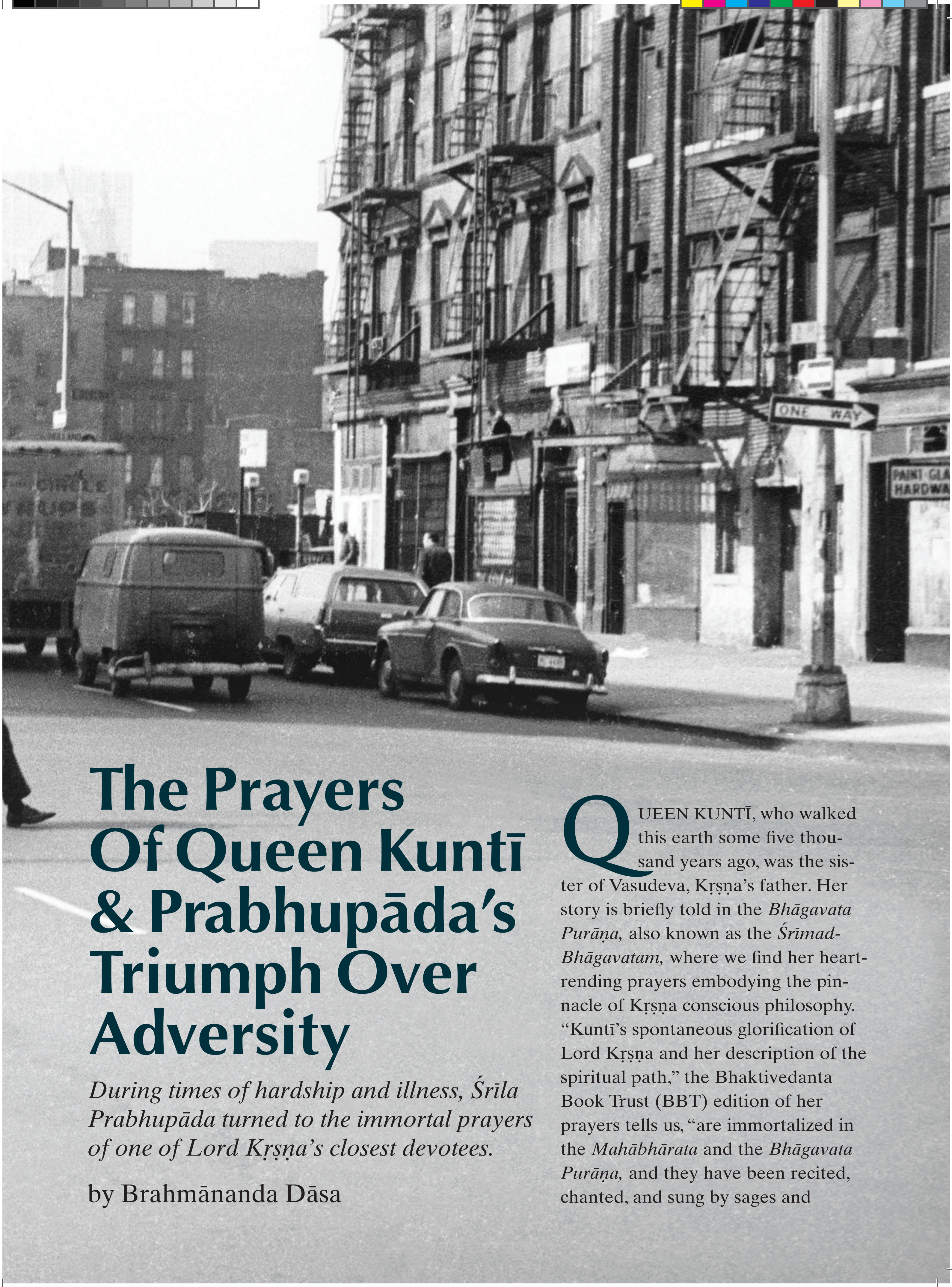


The Prayers Of Queen Kuntī & Prabhupāda's Triumph Over Adversity

During times of hardship and illness, Śrīla Prabhupāda turned to the immortal prayers of one of Lord Kṛṣṇa's closest devotees.

by Brahmānanda Dāsa

QUEEN KUNTĪ, who walked this earth some five thousand years ago, was the sister of Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa's father. Her story is briefly told in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* also known as the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* where we find her heart-rending prayers embodying the pinnacle of Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy. "Kuntī's spontaneous glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa and her description of the spiritual path," the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) edition of her prayers tells us, "are immortalized in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* and they have been recited, chanted, and sung by sages and philosophers for thousands of years.”

“As they appear in the First Canto of the *Bhāgavatam,*” the text continues, “Queen Kuntī’s celebrated prayers consist of only twenty-six couplets (verses 18 through 43 of the Eighth Chapter), yet they are considered a philosophical, theological, and literary masterpiece. The present book (*Teachings of Queen Kuntī*) includes those inspired verses and illuminating commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and the most renowned Vedic scholar and spiritual leader of our time. In addition to this commentary (originally written in 1962), *Teachings of Queen Kuntī* contains further explanations that Śrīla Prabhupāda gave more recently in an absorbing series of lectures. In those memorable talks, delivered in the spring of 1973 at ISKCON’s Western world headquarters in Los Angeles, he analyzed the verses in significantly greater detail and shed even more light upon them.”

These were difficult days. Not only was Prabhupāda alone, but his quarters offered no shower or kitchen.

As an early member of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, I saw how deeply important Queen Kuntī’s verses were to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Even before founding ISKCON in 1966, during Śrīla Prabhupāda’s beginning times in New York City, he had recorded himself singing Kuntī’s prayers. These prayers are the only section of verses Śrīla Prabhupāda ever recorded from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* He was living alone in what was an office on West 72nd Street in New York during the winter of 1965–66, after having come to New York from Butler, Pennsylvania. These were difficult days. Not only was Śrīla Prabhupāda alone, but his quarters offered no shower or kitchen. To bathe and to cook his meals at Dr. Mishra’s apartment-cum-yoga studio, Prabhupāda had to walk seven blocks in the frigid cold, tolerating the howling winds blowing off the Hudson River onto Riverside Drive. Although Śrīla Prabhupāda had an overcoat and a sweater, his clothes were the thin cloth he had worn from Vrindavan and suited for hot, tropical climates, and not New York winters.

Śrīla Prabhupāda had bought a tape recorder, spending the equivalent of one month’s rent; and when no one was visiting him and there was no one to preach to, he recorded his singing of Kuntī’s prayers, accompanying himself on *karatālas*. He was inspired to deeply meditate on these verses during this period of hardship and trial. It is clear that they gave him solace, as he thought about their meaning in relation to his own life.

Soon thereafter, when he opened the world’s first ISKCON temple, in New York on June 1, 1966 – a storefront at 26 Second Avenue – he found himself working especially hard, carrying the slack of newcomers. They knew little of how to serve the spiritual master or his mission. Instead, they took service from him daily as he trained them in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and although this would have exhausted a man half his age, he was always full of energy and ready to do the needful. But then, on May 31, Memorial Day, 1967, he had a stroke.

Since most doctors were away from the city on vacation, we could not get one to come and treat him. Prabhupāda was experiencing spasms and paralysis, and we didn’t know what to do. To alleviate his discomfort, I gently massaged him very carefully, fearing that even this could worsen his condition.

Śrīla Prabhupāda requested three things. He wanted the newly completed painting of Lord Nṛsiṁha placed before his view, and he asked all the devotees to chant the Nṛsiṁhadeva mantras and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.* Devotees chanted all day and all through the night both in New York and at the newly opened San Francisco center.

The third thing Śrīla Prabhupāda asked for was for me to read to him the prayers of Queen Kuntī from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* I stumbled over the pronunciation of the Sanskrit words, and I felt self-conscious reading to him from the book he himself had written, all the while concerned over his deteriorating condition. Perhaps it was the first time a student read to Śrīla Prabhupāda from his books. The only books we had at the time were the few copies of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Śrīla Prabhupāda had brought with him from India, because the first books published in America, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and *Teachings of Lord Caitanya,* did not come until 1968.

Śrīla Prabhupāda accepted my attempt at reading and was satisfied to hear the verses, translations, and his purports read to him by one of his first students. He was teaching us what to do in a life-threatening crisis: to hear the glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa by one of the Lord’s eternal associates and to thus be fully conscious of Him.

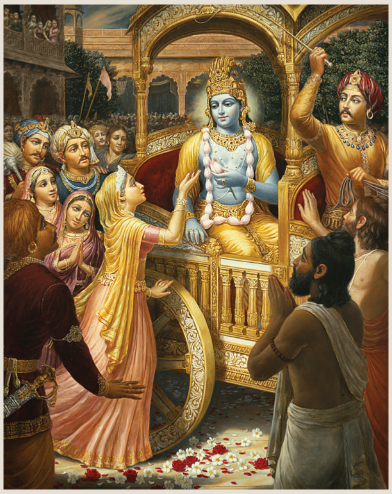
Another Health Crisis

Years later, and after having successfully spread his movement all over the world, Śrīla Prabhupāda was in Vrindavan in August 1974. He was living in his unfinished residence and was overseeing the construction of the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple, which he would inaugurate in April 1975. Śrīla Prabhupāda observed Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, and the following day we celebrated his

The Setting for Queen Kuntī's Prayers

KUNTĪ WAS Lord Kṛṣṇa's aunt (He had incarnated as the son of her brother Vasudeva), yet despite this conventional tie with the Lord, she fully understood His exalted and divine identity. She knew full well that He had descended from His abode in the spiritual world to rid the earth of demoniac military powers and reestablish righteousness. Just before the great war, Kṛṣṇa had revealed all this to her son Arjuna in words immortalized in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.7–8): "Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion—at that time I incarnate Myself. In order to deliver the pious and annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of religion, I advent Myself millennium after millennium."

Kṛṣṇa had accomplished His purpose of "annihilating the miscreants" by orchestrating the destruction of the unholy Kauravas. Then He installed Yudhiṣṭhira on the throne to establish the Pāṇḍava reign, and He consoled the slain warriors' relatives. The scene of the Lord's imminent departure provides the setting for Queen Kuntī's exalted prayers.


Painting by Parīkṣit Dāsa

Kuntī approaches Lord Kṛṣṇa

As Kuntī approached the Lord's chariot and began to address Him, her immediate purpose was to persuade Him to remain in Hastināpura and protect the Pāṇḍava government from reprisals: "O my Lord . . . are You leaving us today, though we are completely dependent on Your mercy and have no one else to protect us, now when all kings are at enmity with us?" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.37)

From this supplication we should not mistakenly conclude that Kuntī's prayers were self-serving. Although her sufferings were far greater than those any ordinary person could endure, she does not beg relief. On the contrary, she prays to suffer even more, for she reasons that her suffering will increase her devotion to the Lord and bring her ultimate liberation: "My dear Kṛṣṇa, Your Lordship has protected us from the poisoned cake, from a great fire, from cannibals, from the vicious assembly, from sufferings during our exile in the forest, and from the battle where great generals fought. . . . I wish that all those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths. (*Bhāg.* 1.8.24–25)

Kuntī's words – the simple and illuminating outpourings of the soul of a great and saintly woman devotee – reveal both the deepest transcendental emotions of the heart and the most profound philosophical and theological penetrations of the intellect. Her words are words of glorification impelled by a divine love steeped in wisdom: "O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else." (*Bhāg.* 1.8.42)

—*Excerpted from the Preface to* Teachings of Queen Kuntī

Vyāsa-pūjā Appearance Day at the construction site. The very next day he became inexplicably ill with a torrid fever and total collapse. I was serving him as his personal secretary, and Śrutakīrti Dāsa was nursing him.

Malaria was going around; several devotees had become afflicted with it, including Śrutakīrti and his replacement, Kulādri Dāsa. Śrīla Prabhupāda had a fever that went up to 105, but he didn't have the chills that usually accompany malaria. A number of western-trained doctors from Delhi and several Ayurvedic practitioners and herbalists from Vrindavan treated him, but no one was able to cure him, or even properly diagnose the debilitating ailment. Śrīla Prabhupāda was getting worse. It was a crisis. No one knew what to do.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was not speaking much, but he did say that the spiritual master accepts the karma of his disciples at the time of initiation. If some of them do not follow the rules and regulations and commit sins, then the spiritual master may become affected by the karma and become ill. This had a very sobering effect on all of us. Śrīla Prabhupāda asked that devotees pray to Lord Nṛsiṁha and have *kīrtana,* and this was done in temples all over the world. Yet again, he asked me to read to him, as he lay critically inert, the prayers of Queen Kuntī.

I read from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* published by the BBT with diacritic marks. It was easier to read the verses, and I had learned more how to read the transliterated Sanskrit, although not perfectly. So, Śrutakīrti and I took turns reading, and then I called in Pradyumna Dāsa, our resident Sanskritist, who read with perfect pronunciation. Śrīla Prabhupāda again demonstrated the importance of hearing these prayers during personal crisis. It was obvious to us that hearing these particular prayers gave Prabhupāda satisfaction and strength. It could even be said that this is what eventually cured him, because, clearly, none of the doctors did.

Śrīla Prabhupāda later wrote a letter commenting on this event (written from Mayapur, October 7, 1974):

It was obvious to us that hearing these particular prayers gave Prabhupāda satisfaction and strength.

> I thank you for your concern for my well-being. Actually I was very ill. I was falling down. But, by your prayers Kṛṣṇa has kindly made me recover. Because you have prayed to Kṛṣṇa, therefore I have recovered. Just like Śrīmatī Kuntī Devī, when there was difficulty, she prayed to Kṛṣṇa. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Not that when there is difficulty I shall forget Kṛṣṇa. Whatever the material condition may be, we should just cling to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Notable Lectures in New York and Los Angeles

Śrīla Prabhupāda extensively lectured on these prayers consecutively at the New York temple in April of 1973 and continued them when he next went to Los Angeles. I was traveling with him as his personal secretary. In New York, Pañcaratna Dāsa asked me if he could videotape Śrīla Prabhupāda's classes. I didn't know what video was, because, in 1973, video was new technology. Pañcaratna's camera was a prototype, using only black and white film. No one else in the movement had such a contraption, nor did anyone have a videotape player, what to speak of a television.

I allowed him to videotape Śrīla Prabhupāda speaking, but I didn't know why he was doing it. I couldn't understand the usefulness of it, because no one would be able to see the tapes. Videotapes at this time were confined to high-tech professionals and broadcasting studios. Pañcaratna was not a high-tech kind of person or an experienced cinematographer. He later confided to me that his video camera was mainly a kind of love-ploy to get as near to Śrīla Prabhupāda as possible and to be able to focus on his lotus face close up, as a meditation.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda entered the temple room, I was dismayed to see all of Pañcaratna's equipment, which took up a good amount of space. The camera was a large bulky thing on a big tripod right in front of the *vyāsāsana.* Several glaring floodlights on stands, with lots of wires, spread out over the floor, and equipment cases and tapes competed for space with all the devotees crowded around the *vyāsāsana.* Śrīla Prabhupāda did not like devotees photographing him, especially while he was lecturing, because it distracted both him and the audience. And the person fiddling with a camera would not be able to hear him properly.

But Pañcaratna was determined to film Śrīla Prabhupāda. Every morning this went on for more than a week. Śrīla Prabhupāda never complained, so I didn't say anything either, but only frowned at Pañcaratna for causing this inconvenient scene. When Śrīla Prabhupāda left New York to go to Los Angeles, he continued to lecture on the prayers of Queen Kuntī, but Pañcaratna stayed in New York. So, practically the only video footage of Śrīla Prabhupāda's innumerable classes is what Pañcaratna took during that week in New York – classes on Kuntī's prayers. Years later, devotees all over the world would relish these tapes, enabling them to see Śrīla Prabhupāda in an intimate way.

After the Kuntī lectures in L.A., Śrīla Prabhupāda ordered the BBT to publish them as a separate book, *Teachings of Queen Kuntī.*

Exemplary Vaiṣṇava Prayers

Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings on prayer, as informed by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition, lean toward selflessness. We are taught not to ask anything of God but instead to pray for service. For example, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – is a prayer to be engaged in the service of the Lord. It beseeches God for nothing other than to be an instrument for His purpose in the world.

If a prayer in the Vaiṣṇava tradition is not asking to be engaged in divine service, then, alternately, it should be an expression of glorification. We usually think of prayer in terms of asking for some boon or protection from God. But prayer in the Vaiṣṇava tradition means to glorify Lord Kṛṣṇa or His incarnations, as illustrated by the prayers of Prahlāda, Arjuna, Bhīṣma, and many others, including Queen Kuntī, recorded in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and elsewhere. And while sometimes great souls ask for spiritual boons, the emphasis is on glorification of the sweet Personality of Godhead, and nothing more.

Brahmānanda Dāsa, one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's first disciples and the president of the first ISKCON temple, at 26 Second Ave., New York City, lives in Vrindavan, India.

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as "the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature," *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

KING AṄGA LEAVES HOME

Because of having a wicked son,
King Aṅga decides to renounce his kingdom.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 13

38 सा तत्पुंसवनं राज्ञी प्राश्य वै पत्युरादधे
गर्भं काल उपावृत्ते कुमारं सुषुवेऽप्रजा

sā tat puṁ-savanaṁ rājñī
prāśya vai patyur ādadhe
garbhaṁ kāla upāvṛtte
kumāraṁ suṣuve 'prajā

sā – she; *tat* – that food; *pum-savanam* – which produces a male child; *rājñī* – the Queen; *prāśya* – eating; *vai* – indeed; *patyuḥ* – from the husband; *ādadhe* – conceived; *garbham* – pregnancy; *kāle* – when the due time; *upāvṛtte* – appeared; *kumāram* – a son; *suṣuve* – gave birth to; *aprajā* – having no son.

Although the Queen had no son, after eating that food, which had the power to produce a male child, she became pregnant by her husband, and in due course of time she gave birth to a son.

PURPORT: Among the ten kinds of purificatory processes, one is *puṁ-savanam,* in which the wife is offered some *prasāda,* or remnants of foodstuff offered to Lord Viṣṇu, so that after sexual intercourse with her husband she may conceive a child.

39 स बाल एव पुरुषो मातामहमनुव्रतः
अधर्मांशोद्भवं मृत्युं तेनाभवदधार्मिकः

sa bāla eva puruṣo
mātāmaham anuvrataḥ
adharmāśodbhavaṁ mṛtyuṁ
tenābhavad adhārmikaḥ

saḥ – that; *bālaḥ* – child; *eva* – certainly; *puruṣaḥ* – male; *mātā-maham* – maternal grandfather; *anuvrataḥ* – a follower of; *adharma* – of irreligion; *aṁśa* – from a portion; *udbhavam* – who appeared; *mṛtyum* – death; *tena* – by this; *abhavat* – he became; *adhārmikaḥ* – irreligious.

That boy was born partially in the dynasty of irreligion. His grandfather was death personified, and the boy grew up as his follower; he became a greatly irreligious person.

PURPORT: The child's mother, Sunīthā, was the daughter of death personified. Generally the daughter receives the qualifications of her father, and the son acquires those of the mother. So, according to the axiomatic truth that things equal to the same thing are equal to one another, the child born of King Aṅga became the follower of his maternal grandfather. According to *smṛti-śāstra,* a child generally follows the principles of his maternal uncle's house. *Narāṇāṁ mātula-karma* means that a child generally follows the qualities of his maternal family. If the maternal family is very corrupt or sinful, the child, even though born of a good father, becomes a victim of the maternal family. According to Vedic civilization, therefore, before the marriage takes place an account is taken of both the boy's and girl's families. If according to astrological calculation the combination is perfect, then marriage takes place. Sometimes, however, there is a mistake, and family life becomes frustrating.

It appears that King Aṅga did not get a very good wife in Sunīthā because she was the daughter of death personified. ① Sometimes the Lord arranges an unfortunate wife for His devotee so that gradually, due to family circumstances, the devotee becomes detached from his wife and home and makes progress in devotional life. It appears that by the arrangement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, King Aṅga, although a pious devotee, got an unfortunate wife like Sunīthā and later on a bad child like Vena. But the result was that he got complete freedom from the entanglement of family life and left home to go back to Godhead.

40 स शरासनमुद्यम्य मृगयुर्वनगोचरः
हन्त्यसाधुर्मृगान् दीनान् वेनोऽसावित्यरौज्जनः

sa śarāsanam udyamya
mṛgayur vana-gocaraḥ
hanty asādhur mṛgān dīnān
veno 'sāv ity arauj janaḥ

saḥ – that boy of the name Vena; *śarāsanam* – his bow; *udyamya* – taking up; *mṛgayuḥ* – the hunter; *vana-gocaraḥ* – going into the forest; *hanti*—used to kill; *asādhuḥ*—being very cruel; *mṛgān* – deer; *dīnān* – poor; *venaḥ* – Vena; *asau* – there he is; *iti* – thus; *araut* – would cry; *janaḥ* – all the people.

After fixing his bow and arrow, the cruel boy used to go to the forest and unnecessarily kill innocent deer, and as soon as he came all the people would cry, "Here comes cruel Vena! Here comes cruel Vena!"

PURPORT: ② *Kṣatriyas* are allowed to hunt in the forest for the purpose of learning the killing art, not to kill animals for eating or for any other purpose. The *kṣatriya* kings were sometimes expected to cut off the head of a culprit in the state. For this reason the *kṣatriyas* were allowed to hunt in the forest. Because this son of King Aṅga, Vena, was born of a bad mother, he was very cruel, and he used to go to the forest and unnecessarily kill the animals. All the neighboring inhabitants would be frightened by his presence, and they would call, "Here comes Vena! Here comes Vena!" So from the beginning of his life he was fearful to the citizens.

1) Why does the Lord sometimes arrange an unfortunate wife for His devotee?
2) Why are *kṣatriyas* allowed to hunt in the forest?
3) Why did King Aṅga think that persons who have no son are fortunate?

41 आक्रीडे क्रीडतो बालान् वयस्यानतिदारुणः
प्रसह्य निरनुक्रोशः पशुमारममारयत्

ākrīḍe krīḍato bālān
vayasyān atidāruṇaḥ
prasahya niranukrośaḥ
paśu-māram amārayat

ākrīḍe – in the playground; *krīḍataḥ* – while playing; *bālān* – boys; *vayasyān* – of his age; *ati-dāruṇaḥ* – very cruel; *prasahya* – by force; *niranukrośaḥ* – merciless; *paśu-māram* – as if slaughtering animals; *amārayat* – killed.

The boy was so cruel that while playing with young boys of his age he would kill them very mercilessly, as if they were animals meant for slaughter.

42 तं विचक्ष्य खलं पुत्रं शासनैर्विविधैर्नृपः
यदा न शासितुं कल्पो भृशमासीत्सुदुर्मनाः

taṁ vicakṣya khalaṁ putraṁ
śāsanair vividhair nṛpaḥ
yadā na śāsituṁ kalpo
bhṛśam āsīt sudurmanāḥ

tam – him; *vicakṣya* – observing; *khalam* – cruel; *putram* – son; *śāsanaiḥ* – by punishments; *vividhaiḥ* – different kinds of; *nṛpaḥ* – the King; *yadā* – when; *na* – not; *śāsitum* – to bring under control; *kalpaḥ* – was able; *bhṛśam* – greatly; *āsīt* – became; *su-durmanāḥ* – aggrieved.

After seeing the cruel and merciless behavior of his son, Vena, King Aṅga punished him in different ways to reform him, but was unable to bring him to the path of gentleness. He thus became greatly aggrieved.

43 प्रायेणाभ्यर्चितो देवो येऽप्रजा गृहमेधिनः
कदपत्यभृतं दःखं ये न विन्दन्ति दुर्भरम्

prāyeṇābhyarcito devo
ye 'prajā gṛha-medhinaḥ
kad-apatya-bhṛtaṁ duḥkhaṁ
ye na vindanti durbharam

prāyeṇa – probably; *abhyarcitaḥ* – was worshiped; *devaḥ* – the Lord; *ye* – they who; *aprajāḥ* – without a son; *gṛha-medhinaḥ* – persons living at home; *kad-apatya* – by a bad son; *bhṛtam*—caused; *duḥkham*—unhappiness; *ye*—they who; *na* – not; *vindanti* – suffer; *durbharam* – unbearable.

The King thought to himself: Persons who have no son are certainly fortunate. ③ They must have worshiped the

Lord in their previous lives so that they would not have to suffer the unbearable unhappiness caused by a bad son.

44 यतः पापीयसी कीर्तिरधर्मश्च महान्नृणाम्
यतो विरोधः सर्वेषां यत आधिरनन्तकः

yataḥ pāpīyasī kīrtir
adharmaś ca mahān nṛṇām
yato virodhaḥ sarveṣāṁ
yata ādhir anantakaḥ

yataḥ – on account of a bad son; *pāpīyasī* – sinful; *kīrtiḥ* – reputation; *adharmaḥ* – irreligion; *ca* – also; *mahān* – great; *nṛṇām* – of men; *yataḥ* – from which; *virodhaḥ* – quarrel; *sarveṣām* – of all people; *yataḥ* – from which; *ādhiḥ* – anxiety; *anantakaḥ* – endless.

A sinful son causes a person's reputation to vanish. His irreligious activities at home cause irreligion and quarrel among everyone, and this creates only endless anxiety.

PURPORT: It is said that a married couple must have a son, otherwise their family life is void. ④ But a son born without good qualities is as good as a blind eye. A blind eye has no use for seeing, but it is simply unbearably painful. The King therefore thought himself very unfortunate to have such a bad son.

45 कस्तं प्रजापदेशं वै मोहबन्धनमात्मनः
पण्डितो बहु मन्येत यदर्थाः क्लेशदा गृहाः

kas taṁ prajāpadeśaṁ vai
moha-bandhanam ātmanaḥ
paṇḍito bahu manyeta
yad-arthāḥ kleśadā gṛhāḥ

kaḥ – who; *tam* – him; *prajā-apadeśam* – son in name only; *vai* – certainly; *moha* – of illusion; *bandhanam* – bondage; *ātmanaḥ* – for the soul; *paṇḍitaḥ* – intelligent man; *bahu manyeta* – would value; *yat-arthāḥ* – because of whom; *kleśa-dāḥ* – painful; *gṛhāḥ* – home.

Who, if he is considerate and intelligent, would desire such a worthless son? Such a son is nothing but a bond of illusion for the living entity, and he makes one's home miserable.

46 कदपत्यं वरं मन्ये सदपत्याच्छुचां पदात्
निर्विद्येत गृहान्मर्त्यो यत्क्लेशनिवहा गृहाः

kad-apatyaṁ varaṁ manye
sad-apatyāc chucāṁ padāt
nirvidyeta gṛhān martyo
yat-kleśa-nivahā gṛhāḥ

kad-apatyam—bad son; *varam*—better; *manye*—I think; *sat-apatyāt*—than a good son; *śucām*—of grief; *padāt*—the source; *nirvidyeta*—becomes detached; *gṛhāt*—from home; *martyaḥ*—a mortal man; *yat*—because of whom; *kleśa-nivahāḥ*—hellish; *gṛhāḥ*—home.

Then the King thought: ⑤ A bad son is better than a good son because a good son creates an attachment for home, whereas a bad son does not. A bad son creates a hellish home from which an intelligent man naturally becomes very easily detached.

PURPORT: The King began to think in terms of attachment and detachment from one's material home. ⑥ According to Prahlāda Mahārāja, the material home is compared to a blind well. If a man falls down into a blind well, it is very difficult to get out of it and begin life again. Prahlāda Mahārāja has advised that one give up this blind well of home life as soon as possible and go to the forest to take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. According to Vedic civilization, this giving up of home by *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa* is compulsory. But people are so attached to their homes that even up to the point of death they do not like to retire from home life. King Aṅga, therefore, thinking in terms of detachment, accepted his bad son as a good impetus for detachment from home life. He therefore considered his bad son his friend since he was helping him become detached from his home. Ultimately one has to learn how to detach oneself from attachment to material life; therefore, if a bad son, by his bad behavior, helps a householder to go away from home, it is a boon.

47 एवं स निर्विण्णमना नृपो गृहा-
न्निशीथ उत्थाय महोदयोदयात्
अलब्धनिद्रोऽनुपलक्षितो नृभि-
र्हित्वा गतो वेनसुवं प्रसुप्ताम्

evaṁ sa nirviṇṇa-manā nṛpo gṛhān
niśītha utthāya mahodayodayāt
alabdha-nidro 'nupalakṣito nṛbhir
hitvā gato vena-suvaṁ prasuptām

evam—thus; *saḥ*—he; *nirviṇṇa-manāḥ*—being indifferent in mind; *nṛpaḥ*—King Aṅga; *gṛhāt*—from home; *niśīthe*—in the dead of night; *utthāya*—getting up; *mahā-*

4) How is a son born without good qualities as good as a blind eye?
5) Why did King Aṅga think that a bad son is better than a good son?
6) To what did Prahlāda compare a material home?

udaya-udayāt—opulent by the blessings of great souls; *alabdha-nidraḥ*—being without sleep; *anupalakṣitaḥ*—without being seen; *nṛbhiḥ*—by people in general; *hitvā*—giving up; *gataḥ*—went off; *vena-suvam*—the mother of Vena; *prasuptām*—sleeping deeply.

Thinking like that, King Aṅga could not sleep at night. He became completely indifferent to household life. Once, therefore, in the dead of night, he got up from bed and left Vena's mother [his wife], who was sleeping deeply. He gave up all attraction for his greatly opulent kingdom, and, unseen by anyone, he very silently gave up his home and opulence and proceeded towards the forest.

PURPORT: ⑦ In this verse the word *mahodayodayāt* indicates that by the blessings of a great soul one becomes materially opulent, but when one gives up attachment to material wealth, that should be considered an even greater blessing from the great souls. It was not a very easy task for the King to give up his opulent kingdom and young, faithful wife, but it was certainly a great blessing of the Supreme Personality of Godhead that he could give up the attachment and go out to the forest without being seen by anyone. There are many instances of great souls' leaving home in this way in the dead of night, giving up attachment for home, wife, and money.

48 विज्ञाय निर्विद्य गतं पतिं प्रजाः
पुरोहितामात्यसुहृद्गणादयः
विचिक्युरुर्व्यामतिशोककातरा
यथा निगूढं पुरुषं कुयोगिनः

vijñāya nirvidya gataṁ patiṁ prajāḥ
purohitāmātya-suhṛd-gaṇādayaḥ
vicikyur urvyām atiśoka-kātarā
yathā nigūḍhaṁ puruṣaṁ kuyoginaḥ

vijñāya—after understanding; *nirvidya*—being indifferent; *gatam*—had left; *patim*—the King; *prajāḥ*—all the citizens; *purohita*—priests; *āmātya*—ministers; *suhṛt*—friends; *gaṇa-ādayaḥ*—and people in general; *vicikyuḥ*—searched; *urvyām*—on the earth; *ati-śoka-kātarāḥ*—being greatly aggrieved; *yathā*—just as; *nigūḍham*—concealed; *puruṣam*—the Supersoul; *ku-yoginaḥ*—inexperienced mystics.

When it was understood that the King had indifferently left home, all the citizens, priests, ministers, friends, and people in general were greatly aggrieved. They began to search for him all over the world, just as a less experienced mystic searches out the Supersoul within himself.

PURPORT: The example of searching for the Supersoul within the heart by the less intelligent mystics is very instructive. The Absolute Truth is understood in three different features, namely impersonal Brahman, localized Paramātmā, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such *kuyoginaḥ,* or less intelligent mystics, can by mental speculation reach the point of the impersonal Brahman, but they cannot find the Supersoul, who is sitting within each living entity. ⑧ When the King left, it was certain that he was staying somewhere else, but because the citizens did not know how to find him they were frustrated like the less intelligent mystics.

49 अलक्षयन्तः पदवीं प्रजापते-
र्हतोद्यमाः प्रत्युपसृत्य ते पुरीम्
ऋषीन् समेतानभिवन्द्य साश्रवो
न्यवेदयन् पौरव भर्तृविप्लवम्

alakṣayantaḥ padavīṁ prajāpater
hatodyamāḥ pratyupasṛtya te purīm
ṛṣīn sametān abhivandya sāśravo
nyavedayan paurava bhartṛ-viplavam

alakṣayantaḥ—not finding; *padavīm*—any trace; *prajāpateḥ*—of King Aṅga; *hata-udyamāḥ*—having become disappointed; *pratyupasṛtya*—after returning; *te*—those citizens; *purīm*—to the city; *ṛṣīn*—the great sages; *sametān*—assembled; *abhivandya*—after making respectful obeisances; *sa-aśravaḥ*—with tears in their eyes; *nyavedayan*—informed; *paurava*—O Vidura; *bhartṛ*—of the King; *viplavam*—the absence.

When the citizens could not find any trace of the King after searching for him everywhere, they were very disappointed, and they returned to the city, where all the great sages of the country assembled because of the King's absence. With tears in their eyes the citizens offered respectful obeisances and informed the sages in full detail that they were unable to find the King anywhere.

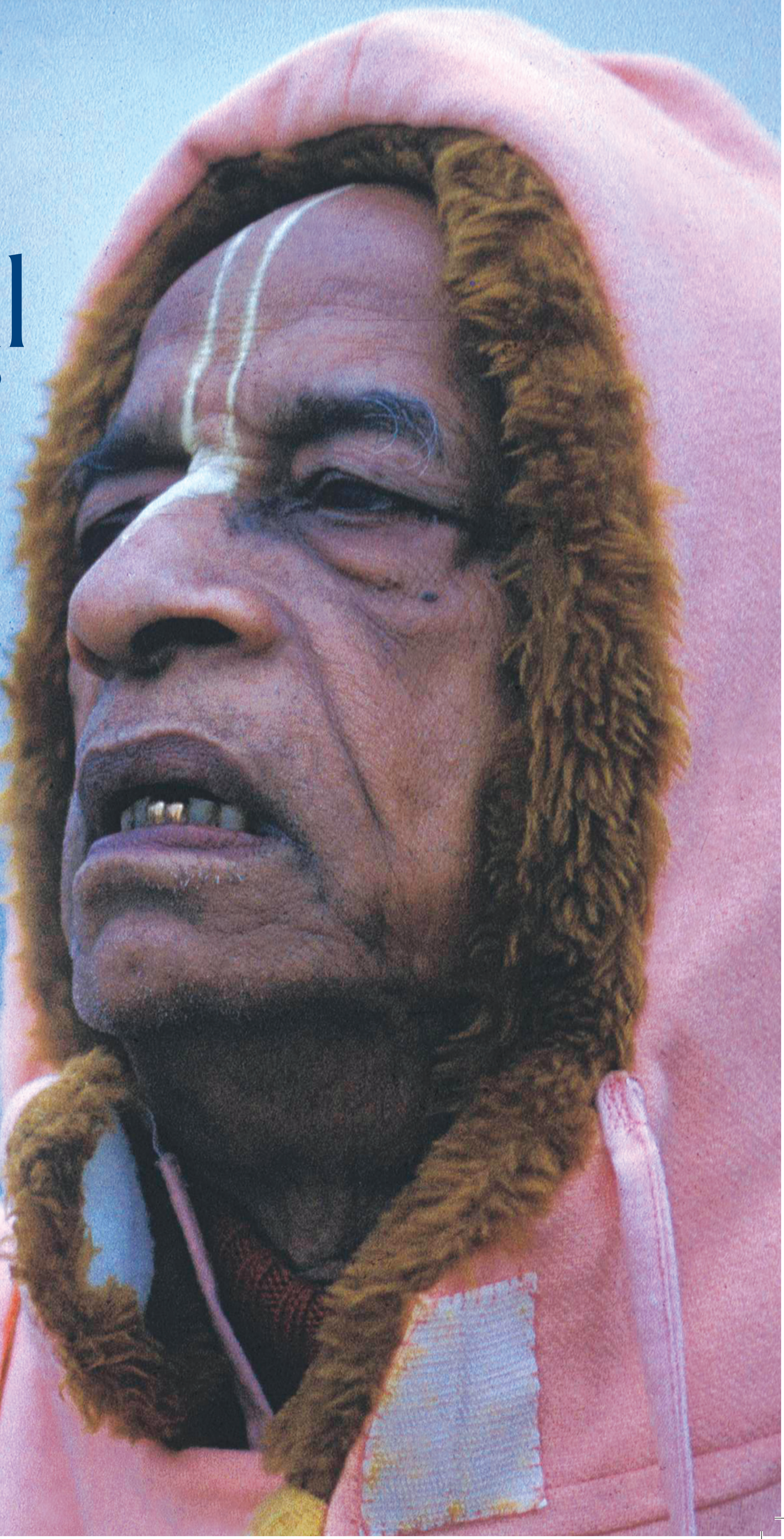
[*Continued in the next issue.*]

7) What is a greater blessing from great souls than becoming materially opulent?
8) To whom are the citizens compared in their inability to find King Aṅga?

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

“Nobody Knows Life’s Real Purpose”

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Mr. C. Hennis of the United Nations International Labour Organization took place in Geneva, Switzerland, on May 31, 1974.



Mr. Hennis: The International Labour Organization is interested in promoting social justice and protecting the worker.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: By natural arrangement, the social body has four divisions: the brain division, for guidance; the arm division, for protection; the belly division, for sustenance; and the leg division, for assistance. Every one of them is meant for maintaining the social body, and the whole body is meant for maintaining every one of them. But if you think about it objectively, the brain is the first division, the arms are the second, the belly the third, and the legs the fourth.

To keep your body healthy, you care for all these different divisions. But if you simply take care of the legs and not the brain, then you do not have a good, healthy body. The United Nations is taking care of society's fourth division, the workers. What care are they taking of the first division? That is my question. At the present moment in society, there is very, very little care for the first-class men, the thoughtful men.

Mr. Hennis: The International Labour Organization has as one of its major aims to promote social justice. And that means that every class of worker has its proper place in society, should have a full measure of human dignity, and should have a proper share in the rewards for labor. . . . We are trying to ensure a measure of uniformity in social justice, in treatment of labor and protection of labor, and in security, occupational safety, and health, and in all these things that are of importance to the worker, as well as in payments to professional workers such as architects, nurses, doctors, veterinarians, and so on.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: According to the Vedic conception of society, the higher three classes – the intelligent, the protective, and the productive classes – are never to be bound to an employer by a salary. They remain free. Only the fourth class, the laboring class, is employed. My point is that the United Nations should now think how the whole human society can live peacefully, with a real purpose in life – not whimsically, without any purpose in life. Wherever I go, when I ask any gentleman, "What is the purpose of life?" he cannot explain, That means there is no truly intelligent class. Nobody knows life's real, spiritual purpose – realizing the self and realizing God.

Mr. Hennis: Well, I think that the International Labour Organization is devoted to the reduction of inequalities between the different classes of men with a view to getting them all a better share of the good things of life, and by that, they may begin to reach a greater degree of human happiness – as they understand it, as the people themselves understand it. It may be that they don't understand it well.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. For example, in America the laborer class is very highly paid. But because there is no spiritual guidance – no intelligent class – the laborer class is wondering, "Now I have some money – so how shall I use it?" And often they misspend their money on drinking. You may think that you are guaranteeing the laborer class a good living, but because there is no intelligent class to guide them – no brain in the social body – they will misspend their money and create disturbances.

Mr. Hennis: Well, we try to look after that in an indirect way. As I said, we don't tell people how to spend their money. We don't tell them what to do in their free time. We do try to make sure that they have proper facilities for leisure, that they have proper opportunities, sports grounds, swimming pools, and so forth, although that's not our primary concern. But what we do try to do – and this will interest you very much – we have a very big program concerned with workers' education. We endeavor to provide programs of education to the worker in teaching him how to understand the problems of modern industry, to understand the problems of management, the people on the other side of the bargaining table; to understand how to read a balance sheet, for example, in a company or understand what are the problems that face the management as distinct from the workers in a firm; to understand the basic rudiments of economics and finance and that kind of thing.

Now clearly, if a man wants to drink, he wants to drink. But we feel . . . we are not interested in the drink particularly, except in that it represents a hazard at work. Then it may be dangerous to the man in his occupation. There, of course, we are interested in it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. That is not the point. The point is that everyone in society should be guided by the intelligent class, the brain. Therefore the brain must be properly maintained. That is our point.

Mr. Hennis: Well, I would say, to the extent that all this has a bearing on improving a man's position in his job, improving his skills at work, and improving his ability to represent his fellow man in trade unions and that kind of thing, we are concerned with it. We are concerned with improving his general culture, his general education, and in particular his education as a worker in relation to industrial and trade-union life in general. We hope by this means a man will improve his status, and by improving his status, he will have other things to think about than just getting drunk.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We want the laborers to work intelligently, for life's real purpose. And life's real purpose is to please God and realize God. Not that the laborers should simply become hard-working like asses, without any intelligence, without any purpose in life. Of all the animals, the ass is the most hard-working – but he is still an animal, because he does not know why he is working. You see? No intelligence. We don't want that. We want an intelligent class to offer guidance, so that laborers can work with intelligence and realize God. That is the difference between you and us.

> **Everyone in society should be guided by the intelligent class, the brain. Therefore the brain must be properly maintained. That is our point.**

e-Krishna

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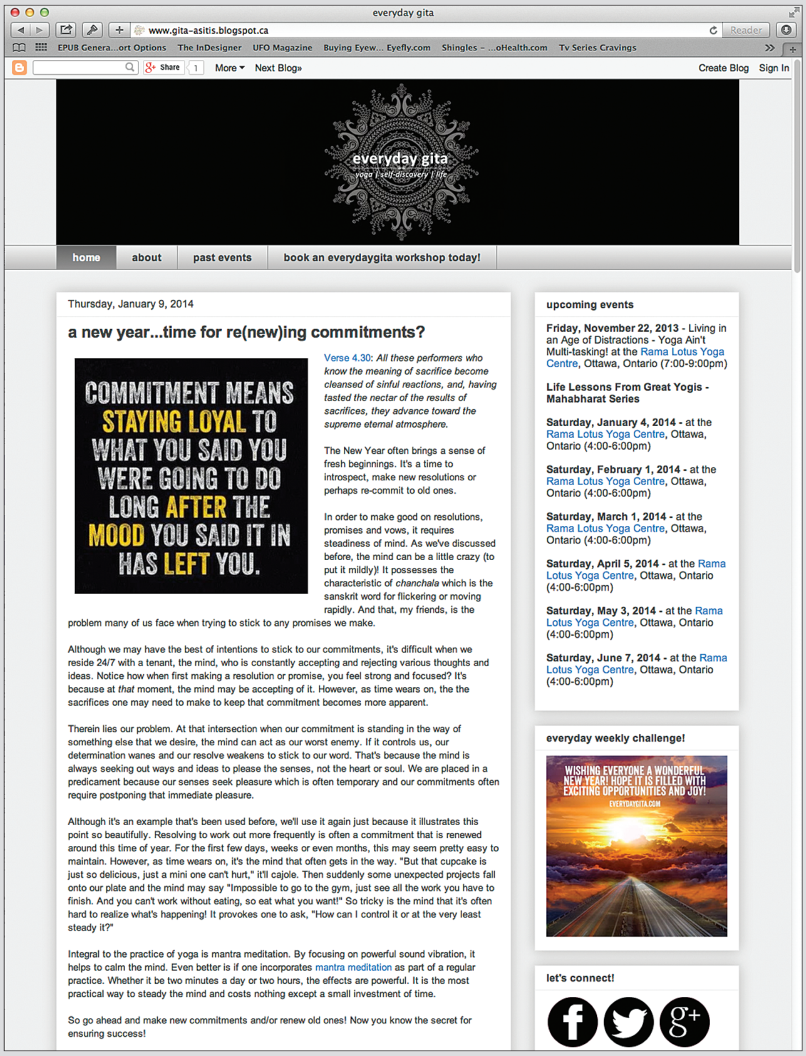
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COMMITMENT MEANS STAYING LOYAL TO WHAT YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO DO LONG AFTER THE MOOD YOU SAID IT IN HAS LEFT YOU.
WISHING EVERYONE A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR! HOPE IT IS FILLED WITH EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES AND JOY!
EVERYDAYGITA.COM

Thursday, January 9, 2014

a new year...time for re(new)ing commitments?

Verse 4.30: *All these performers who know the meaning of sacrifice become cleansed of sinful reactions, and, having tasted the nectar of the results of sacrifices, they advance toward the supreme eternal atmosphere.*

The New Year often brings a sense of fresh beginnings. It's a time to introspect, make new resolutions or perhaps re-commit to old ones.

In order to make good on resolutions, promises and vows, it requires steadiness of mind. As we've discussed before, the mind can be a little crazy (to put it mildly)! It possesses the characteristic of *chanchala* which is the sanskrit word for flickering or moving rapidly. And that, my friends, is the problem many of us face when trying to stick to any promises we make.

Although we may have the best of intentions to stick to our commitments, it's difficult when we reside 24/7 with a tenant, the mind, who is constantly accepting and rejecting various thoughts and ideas. Notice how when first making a resolution or promise, you feel strong and focused? It's because at *that* moment, the mind may be accepting of it. However, as time wears on, the the sacrifices one may need to make to keep that commitment becomes more apparent.

Therein lies our problem. At that intersection when our commitment is standing in the way of something else that we desire, the mind can act as our worst enemy. If it controls us, our determination wanes and our resolve weakens to stick to our word. That's because the mind is always seeking out ways and ideas to please the senses, not the heart or soul. We are placed in a predicament because our senses seek pleasure which is often temporary and our commitments often require postponing that immediate pleasure.

Although it's an example that's been used before, we'll use it again just because it illustrates this point so beautifully. Resolving to work out more frequently is often a commitment that is renewed around this time of year. For the first few days, weeks or even months, this may seem pretty easy to maintain. However, as time wears on, it's the mind that often gets in the way. "But that cupcake is just so delicious, just a mini one can't hurt," it'll cajole. Then suddenly some unexpected projects fall onto our plate and the mind may say "Impossible to go to the gym, just see all the work you have to finish. And you can't work without eating, so eat what you want!" So tricky is the mind that it's often hard to realize what's happening! It provokes one to ask, "How can I control it or at the very least steady it?"

Integral to the practice of yoga is mantra meditation. By focusing on powerful sound vibration, it helps to calm the mind. Even better is if one incorporates mantra meditation as part of a regular practice. Whether it be two minutes a day or two hours, the effects are powerful. It is the most practical way to steady the mind and costs nothing except a small investment of time.

So go ahead and make new commitments and/or renew old ones! Now you know the secret for ensuring success!

upcoming events

Friday, November 22, 2013 - Living in an Age of Distractions - Yoga Ain't Multi-tasking! at the Rama Lotus Yoga Centre, Ottawa, Ontario (7:00-9:00pm)

Life Lessons From Great Yogis - Mahabharat Series

Saturday, January 4, 2014 - at the Rama Lotus Yoga Centre, Ottawa, Ontario (4:00-6:00pm)

Saturday, February 1, 2014 - at the Rama Lotus Yoga Centre, Ottawa, Ontario (4:00-6:00pm)

Saturday, March 1, 2014 - at the Rama Lotus Yoga Centre, Ottawa, Ontario (4:00-6:00pm)

Saturday, April 5, 2014 - at the Rama Lotus Yoga Centre, Ottawa, Ontario (4:00-6:00pm)

Saturday, May 3, 2014 - at the Rama Lotus Yoga Centre, Ottawa, Ontario (4:00-6:00pm)

Saturday, June 7, 2014 - at the Rama Lotus Yoga Centre, Ottawa, Ontario (4:00-6:00pm)

everyday weekly challenge!

let's connect!

www.everydaygita.com

Most Vaiṣṇava websites are like online magazines or newspapers. The ones like magazines present images and text with a focus on particular subjects, such as chanting the *mahā-mantra,* book distribution, collections of *kīrtanas,* or the teachings of *ācāryas.*

Some sites present information about particular temples and the presiding deities there, and others inform about Vaiṣṇava organizations, such as research centers, *prasāda*-distribution groups, or educational institutions.

The news sites report on local and international events, letting us see the programs and activities going on around the world. Some Vaiṣṇava news sites focus internally, mainly catering to devotees; others focus externally, intending to give nondevotees an insight into the world of ISKCON.

Another kind of website devotees use is called a blog. The term *blog* is short for web log. It can work much like a diary, where people post entries about their experiences and day-to-day activities. This kind of site is used to share things about oneself with others. A personal blog is often used to communicate travel experiences or allow friends and family to keep up-to-date with someone's activities.

Devotees also create blogs to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Using a blog, you can share information and realizations about Kṛṣṇa with a worldwide audience from your laptop in your living room or your tablet in your kitchen.

www.everydaygita.com is a blog by Vṛndāvana Vinodinī Dāsī from Montreal, Canada. She started the blog to commemorate Gita Jayanti, the anniversary of the day Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* on the sacred ground of Kurukshetra.

"*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* is one of my favorite books," writes Vṛndāvana Vinodinī. "In fact, I often comment that it's my handbook for life. If I have a question or a problem, the *Gītā* never lets me down."

She decided to start a blog and write her thoughts and realizations about every verse in the *Gītā.*

Everydaygita.com also allows you to enter into a dialogue with Vṛndāvana Vinodinī. After reading an entry, you can comment on the verse or what Vṛndāvana has written about it. You can also read comments by other readers.

In the column on the right, you can jump between the chapters the author has posted about or search for a verse or phrase you are interested in.

Enter your email address to receive a message when each new blog post is published, or use the archive function on the bottom of the right column to browse all of the posts made so far.

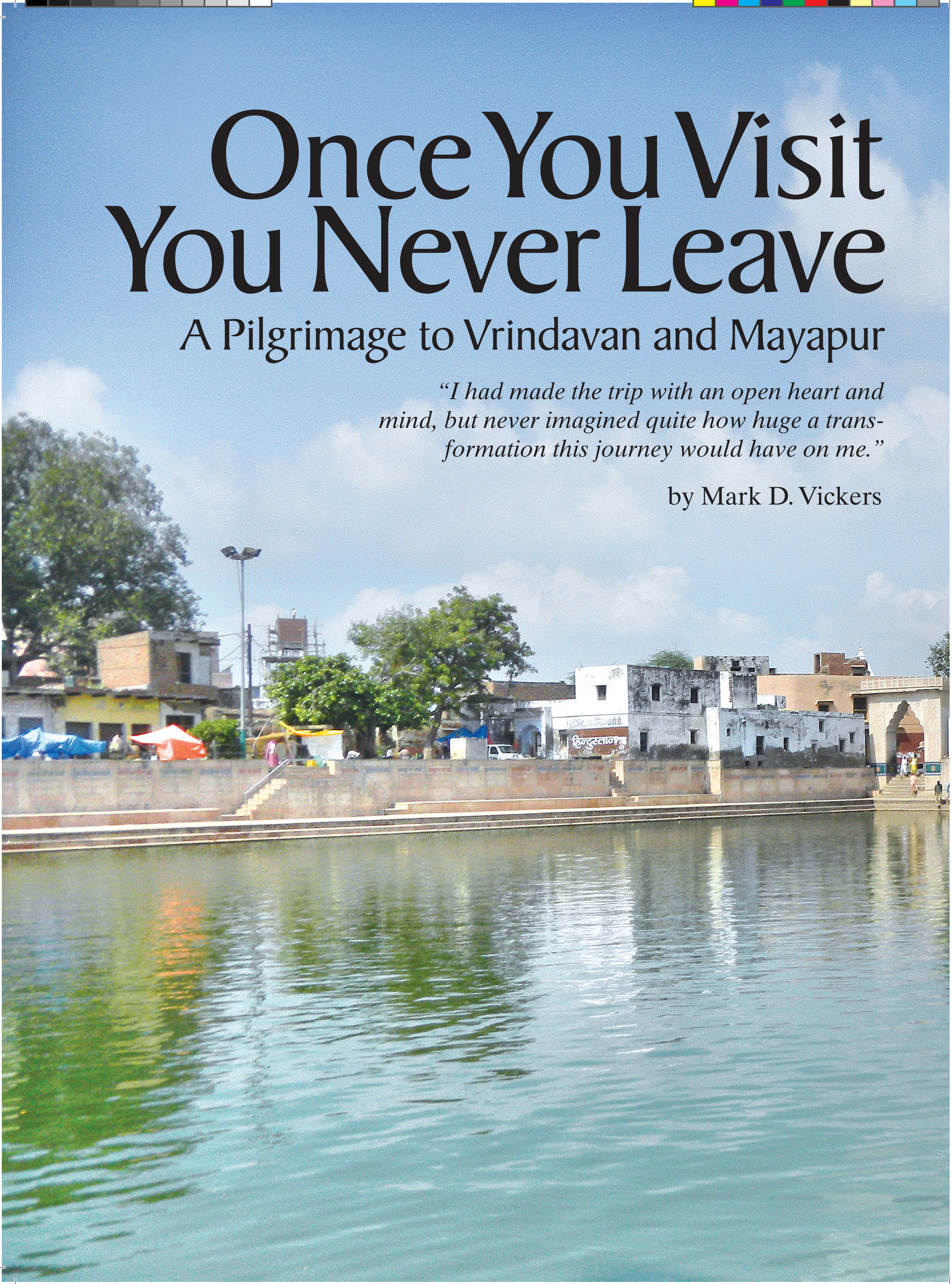
– Antony Brennan

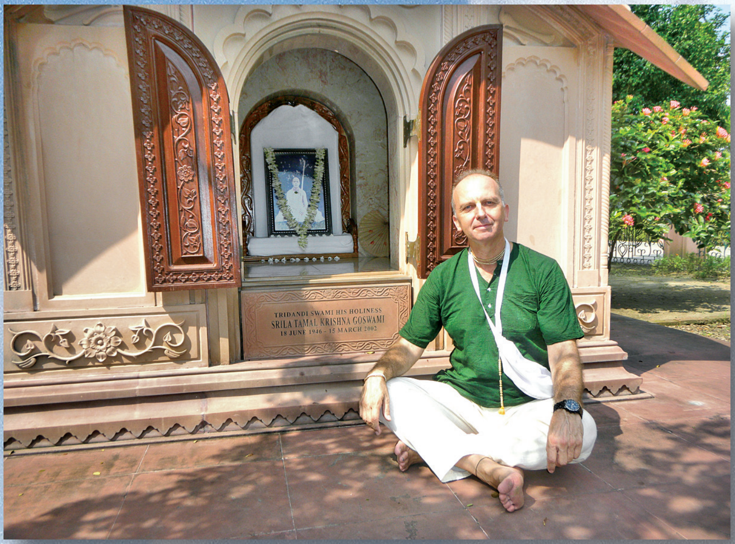
Once You Visit You Never Leave

A Pilgrimage to Vrindavan and Mayapur

"I had made the trip with an open heart and mind, but never imagined quite how huge a transformation this journey would have on me."

by Mark D. Vickers




TRIDANDI SWAMI HIS HOLINESS
SRILA TAMAL KRISHNA GOSWAMI
19 JUNE 1946 – 15 MARCH 2002

The author (above) at the Samādhi of Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami in Mayapur. Radha-kunda, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's sacred lake (below), sits at the northern tip of Govardhan Hill.

Mark D. Vickers

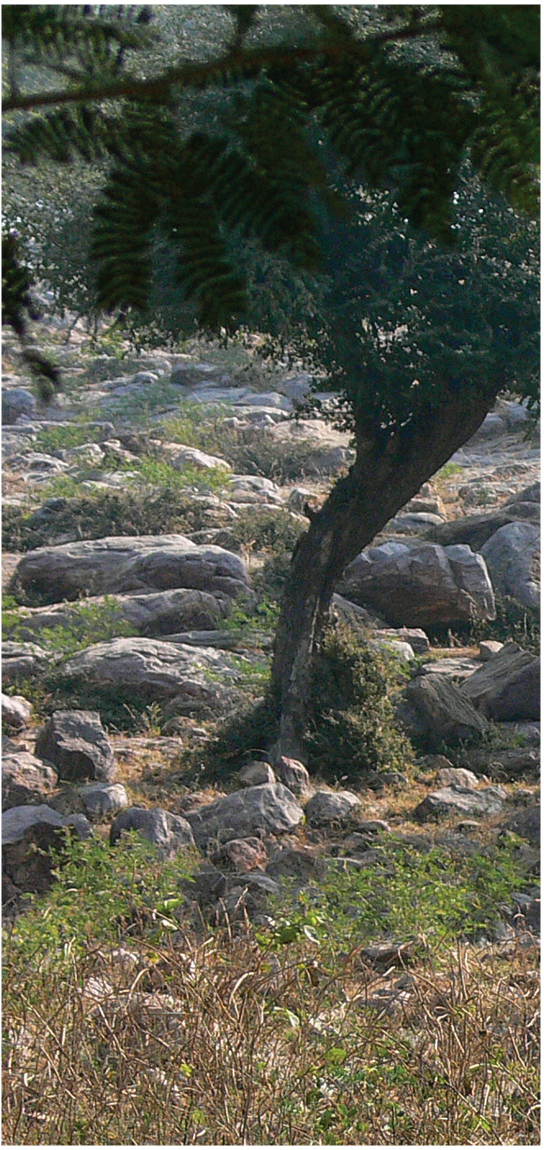
I STARTED PLANNING my pilgrimage to Vrindavan and Mayapur early last summer at my home in Taiwan. As my dates were becoming fixed, Saṅkīrtana Dāsa, my friend and mentor from the Taipei temple, told me he would also be visiting Vrindavan around the same time, and we synchronized our outbound flights so we could travel together. The weeks flew by, and suddenly it was October 4 and time to meet up for a flight to Shanghai, and from there to New Delhi, arriving at 1:10 A.M. (local time) the next day.

Our first night was to be at the ISKCON temple in Govardhan, the holy site forty kilometers outside the town of Vrindavan where Lord Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhan Hill fifty centuries ago. We arrived around 5:30 A.M. My first impressions were of an interesting, tranquil, and beautiful place with courtyards, gardens, a small *goshala* (cow sanctuary), and a real feeling of quiet devotion.

We were shown to the room we'd reserved, and within half an hour we started the 22-km *parikramā* (devotional circumambulation) of sacred Govardhan Hill. I have to admit I was surprised at the hill. It wasn't the mountainous

outcrop I had imagined, but a small hillock perhaps twenty-five meters high. I then remembered reading about the curse of Pulastya Muni, which was causing the hill to shrink by the size of a mustard seed every day. Regardless, being next to it felt very, very special.

The walk around Govardhan Hill included stops at various sites of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. When we reached Govinda Kunda, we touched the water of the pond to our heads and sat for a while discussing Lord Kṛṣṇa's lifting of the hill. Kṛṣṇa had persuaded the locals that their annual offerings to Indra were misguided. They should gather everything they had ready for the sacrifice to Indra and use it to worship Govardhan Hill instead. This so incensed Indra that he challenged Kṛṣṇa. For seven days and nights he tried to flood the area with torrential rain. Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhan Hill on one finger to give shelter to the people and animals of the area. Eventually Indra had to accept Kṛṣṇa's superiority, and in repentance bathed and worshiped Him at this very place. This pastime was an important demonstration that sacrificial worship of demigods is not required. Rather,



Bhūrijana Dāsa

Mark D. Vickers

The ISKCON temple at Govardhan (above) was formerly the palace of a king from Madhya Pradesh. A cow grazes on Govardhan Hill (above, right), which Lord Kṛṣṇa revealed to be a form of Himself. At right, an old Govardhan temple of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Madana Mohana, "the enchanter of Cupid."

what's required is loving devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, who revealed that Govardhan Hill is in fact a form of Himself. To be here now seemed so magical. I wished I could sit for longer and contemplate deeper on Kṛṣṇa's activities in this area.

The Most Auspicious Holy Place

We continued our walk until we reached Radha-kunda. Hidden for many centuries, Radha-kunda was rediscovered by Lord Caitanya in the early sixteenth century, as was the neighboring Shyama-kunda. We paid respects at a temple and then sat and prayed, each in our own way, by the sacred pools.

I remembered the story of how Kṛṣṇa at this site had saved the villagers from the demon Ariṣṭāsura, who had taken the form of a raging bull. Afterwards Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī reminded Kṛṣṇa that to kill a bull is a sin and that He had to bathe in all the sacred rivers to counteract the sin. Kṛṣṇa then called all the sacred rivers, who appeared in person and filled a pond He had dug with His foot – Shyama-kunda. Kṛṣṇa then told Rādhā that She and the other cowherd girls (*gopīs*) had become contaminated by siding with the bull-demon and needed purification. So they dug a pond with their bangles, and the sacred rivers, with Kṛṣṇa's permission, filled Her pond – Radha-kunda – the most auspicious and holy of all sacred places.

Saṅkīrtana bathed in the water of Radha-kunda and then invited me to do likewise for my own spiritual benefit. I am usually skeptical about many such things – the power of the mind to believe something it wants to believe can be so strong – but in this case I felt something very real. Not only was the water cool and refreshing, but it refreshed my very being.

We returned to the ISKCON grounds shortly after 1:00 P.M., and after lunch it should have been time to rest, but my mind was wide awake with what I had seen and felt. I walked in the grounds and visited the *goshala*. The cows were so sweet, such characters, and I loved feeling them nuzzle against me.

Mark D. Vickers

Pilgrims walk under an arch connecting the two sides of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Samādhi (right) to enter the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir (right). At far right, the author and his traveling companion, Saṅkīrtana Dāsa, at a goshala *along the Govardhan* parikramā *trail.*

Remembering TKG

After that I sat by Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami's Puṣpa Samādhi. This memorial tomb contains not his body, but flowers that were on his body as he passed from this world. He had opened a temple at Govardhan and had spent considerable time here. His body is entombed in Mayapur, and I would later visit his Samādhi there.

I had known TKG, as he was often called, in Hong Kong in 1981–82 and should have been initiated by him, but for various reasons it didn't happen. He had also asked me to move into the temple and give up my newly acquired career, but I refused. Nevertheless, I have always felt a powerful connection with him, and he remains dear to my heart. I said a few prayers – it was more like talking to him, and I hope that my approach wasn't offensive, but it was from my heart. I just wanted to tell him that I was there and how much I missed him. I chanted a few rounds of *japa,* and then the ants got the better of me, and so I walked some more.

I strolled the kilometer back to the village, not able to stop imagining that Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet might have trodden this very dust. I bought a couple of sadhus lunch, and no sooner had I done that than two more came and asked me to buy them flashlights. I wasn't sure if I was just being another stupid foreigner getting fooled, but I reckoned that as they weren't asking for money but for food and flashlights, perhaps they were genuinely in need.

As I lay in bed that evening, I reflected on all I had experienced in my first eighteen hours. The whole atmosphere felt special. My character has always favored quieter places, and this seemed so perfect.

I woke refreshed, and we joined the beautiful morning *ārati* at 4:15 A.M. The shrine room was intimate and serene, with deities of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma and, in a separate space, Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda. When we left for the town of Vrindavan a few hours later, my departing thoughts were "This is a place where one could seriously study the scriptures," and I hoped to have the good fortune to return in less rushed fashion.

Vrindavan, Prabhupāda's Home

Vrindavan is about 85 miles south of New Delhi and a 45-minute car ride from Govardhan. On arrival we went to pay our respects in ISKCON's beautiful Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir, which is near the entrance to the town and its many temples. I was struck by the beauty of the place, and by the care and attention it obviously received to keep it so clean and tidy amidst the hustle and bustle of life outside. I felt strong emotions, especially visiting Śrīla Prabhupāda's beautiful Samādhi. I forgot all about my traveling companion. This was my time alone with Prabhupāda, this amazing person who had traveled to the USA in 1965 when he was sixty-nine years old, almost penniless, but determined to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. What an inspiration, and what a great example to us all.

Our lodging was about eight minutes' walk from the temple complex. I would come to know the road well over the next days, from our 4:00 A.M. walk for morning services, to the 8:00 or 9:00 P.M. return in the darkness of the evening, having listened to some talks, and all times in-between. Monkeys sat on the walls watching as people walked past; cows, with their big, beautiful eyes, strolled along at a much more leisurely pace; people called out "Rādhe! Rādhe!" as greeting to each other, as words of farewell, even as a means of expressing "Get out of the way – I'm coming through." "Rādhe! Rādhe!" And on a couple of occasions a camel sauntered along with a big wooden cart in tow, the camel driver looking somewhat incongruous as he chatted merrily on his cell phone.

When we first arrived, as my traveling companion settled into the rooms we were sharing, I left him and returned to the temple. Sorting out my bed could wait; my desire to soak up the atmosphere in the temple could not. I found my way back, paid my respects to the deities, and listened to the *kīrtana* that goes on twenty-four hours a day here, letting it resonate in my heart. I then returned to the relative quiet of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Samādhi, just a few steps across the lovely clean marble courtyard.

A group of women were singing *kīrtana* sweetly. I prostrated to ISKCON's founder-*ācārya* and walked around the shrine three times before settling myself onto the marble floor, *japa* beads in hand. I had no idea of time, nor did I care.

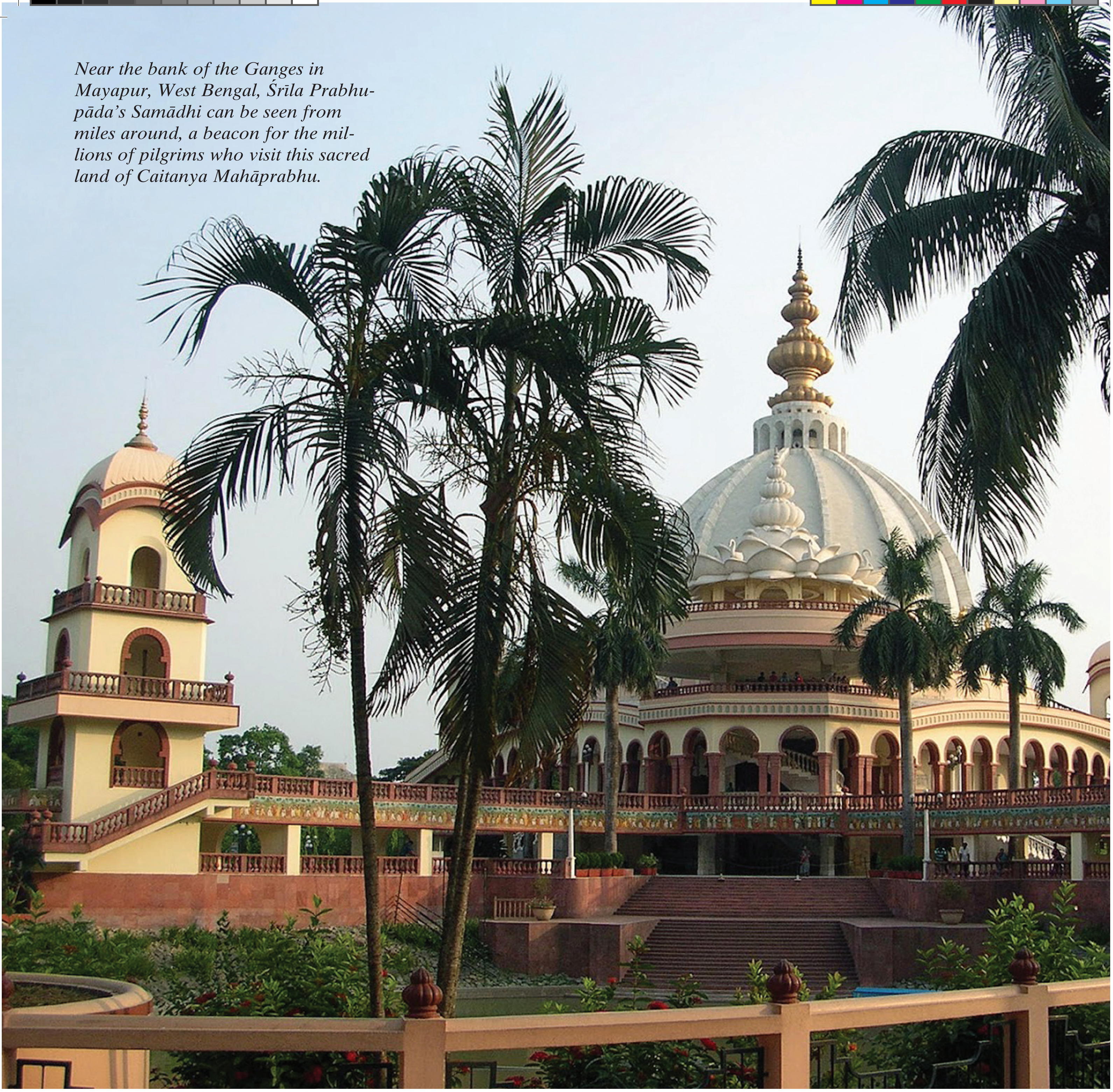
And so time passed in Vrindavan over the forthcoming days.

Reunion with the Hong Kong Deities

I received a message from Saṅkarṣaṇa Dāsa Adhikārī, an inspiring ISKCON preacher and guru, that I could visit him. I felt privileged to spend time with him, and to meet some of his followers and listen to his talks. The same Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa deities I had worshiped at the Hong Kong temple back in 1981–82 are now under his care. TKG had discovered the Kṛṣṇa deity (Gopīnātha) on Juhu Beach in Mumbai, and an ISKCON Life Member, a former king of Udaipur, donated a beautiful deity of Rādhārāṇī.

It was an amazing, very special feeling to see Them again, and I was thrilled one evening when Saṅkarṣaṇa Dāsa gave me two tiny flower garlands these small deities had been wearing. It was a lovely lesson to see the devotional care being taken to please the deities.

One day Saṅkarṣaṇa took me to see Śrīla Prabhupāda's private rooms within the temple complex. Yet again I felt moved to be where Śrīla Prabhupāda had spent time, to see the bed from which he passed from this world, and to be allowed to touch my forehead where his feet would have been. Just to see these things that belonged to him made



Near the bank of the Ganges in Mayapur, West Bengal, Śrīla Prabhupāda's Samādhi can be seen from miles around, a beacon for the millions of pilgrims who visit this sacred land of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

me want to beg his forgiveness for not being closely part of this wonderful movement since I first had contact back in 1977–78. Things happened, life got in the way, *māyā,* time passes so quickly – I can waste no more of whatever life I have left in this body.

One day we took a ricksha to the Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple, built in 1542 by Jīva Gosvāmī. The deity, carved by Rūpa Gosvāmī, has been worshiped ever since. There were many fascinating things to see at Rādhā-Dāmodara, including the *samādhis* of prominent gurus in Lord Caitanya's line. But I was particularly moved to see the two rooms Śrīla Prabhupāda stayed in prior to his departure to the West in 1965. The simplicity and austerity were striking.

For my last full day in Vrindavan I returned to Govardhan to meet a close associate of Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami: Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami. These were precious hours spent in the privacy of his room. His concern, loving kindness, and compassion hit me incredibly deeply. After a couple of hours with him I felt reassured, enlivened, energized, and recharged. I paid my respects to him, and as I stood up he gave me the warmest of hugs, which touched my inner being.

I could not remember ever feeling this way even when my father hugged me as a child.

On to Mayapur

The next morning it was time to meet another couple of wonderful devotees, and then say my farewells and continue my journey alone to Mayapur. A car took me to Delhi, where I had been booked into a hotel overnight, and then a flight first thing in the morning to Kolkata. A car was waiting and carried me safely on the four-hour journey to Mayapur.

I was shown to my room and later had time to walk around the ISKCON grounds. As I explored, somehow I immediately felt I was home. I had just arrived, I didn't really yet know where things were, and still it felt like home.

I thought about Lord Caitanya, the combined form of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, who appeared here in 1486, and about how He started the *saṅkīrtana* movement. I pondered in wonder about how Śrīla Prabhupāda had continued Lord Caitanya's mission some five hundred years later. Mayapur was always so precious to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I found Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami's Samādhi and knelt in front of him once more. Again I just talked to him, told him that the article "What Hare Kṛṣṇa Means To Me," which he had asked me to write in 1981, had been published in the September/October 2013 issue of *Back to Godhead,* and then I said "So now, Gurudeva, what next?"

Over the next five or six days I enjoyed walking around the wonderful complex so much. I looked at the building work and the architect's plans for the new construction. I stared with amazement at Śrīla Prabhupāda's memorial. I joined the morning services and attended the daily *Bhāgavatam* class. I visited Śrīla Prabhupāda's Bhajan Kutir, his original residence on ISKCON's Mayapur property, and sat in wonderment thinking of how he had returned to India in 1970 and then, the following year, worshiped Lord Caitanya in this straw hut, the first building of what is now the expansive Sri Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir complex.

Doubts Dissolving

Something amazing, something very, very special, was happening to me. All my doubts, questions, and concerns just melted away. Suddenly I could see the deities as I had never been able to see them before. I felt I could relate to them directly, could "feel" them somewhere deep inside, communicate with them. I prayed and prayed, especially to Lord Narasiṁhadeva, exposing my inner feelings to Him, surrendering, and asking Him to do with me whatever He wanted. I felt as if this was really it – what I had been searching for all these years. It made sense.

I met more wonderful devotees who were all so welcoming and made me feel I was with family. One devotee kindly arranged for me to meet the brothers and longtime Mayapur *pūjārīs* Paṅkajāṅghrī Dāsa and Jananivāsa Dāsa. They were kind and warm and patient. One morning Paṅkajāṅghrī Dāsa must have noticed me praying sincerely to Narasiṁhadeva; he stepped forward and gave me one of the Lord's *tulasī* leaves. That little gesture meant so much to me I could have cried.

The week passed all too quickly. I didn't want to leave, ever. My emotions were running high, and I couldn't control them. For the last two days, whenever I thought of leaving, tears came to my eyes. When I prayed to the deities on my last day, I couldn't keep the tears from falling down my cheeks.

I slowly walked to Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami's Samādhi again and knelt before him to say I was leaving but would be back. I sobbed. I no longer cared if anyone saw me. I walked back to Śrīla Prabhupāda's Bhajan Kutir one final time and listened to a few minutes of the 24-hour *kīrtana.* I walked inside and prostrated by his bed, touching my forehead to his shoes.

With such emotions, it was time to leave. I was amazed at the change in me. I had made the trip with an open heart and mind, but never imagined quite how huge a transformation this journey would have on me. I had been told, "Once you visit, you never leave." Now I understand why. ❀

Mark Vickers is a retired British Army officer living in Taiwan.

Fletcher Dr

Photo: Yamarāja Dāsa

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma,

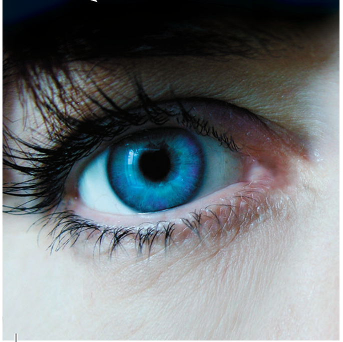
PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama"). To hear

Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting, go to krishna.com/hare-krishna-maha-mantra.

THE VEDIC OBSERVER

Transcendental Commentary on the Issues of the Day



Photographer: Susan Quinland-Stringer / Agency: Dreamstime.com

Why India's Women Are Not Safe

by Purushottam Kumar

THE SURGE IN rape cases in India has shaken the conscience of every right-thinking Indian. People were outraged when in December 2012 a girl was gang-raped and killed in Delhi. Then in August 2013 a woman photojournalist was gang-raped in Mumbai. After the Delhi gang-rape episode there were widespread protests and demands for tougher rape laws. The furor subsided, but not because there were no more rapes reported. When such horrendous incidents occur in large cities, they hog the limelight, but when they occur in small cities and villages, they go unnoticed. Why has rape become so common in India? Despite stringent laws and the social exclusion of rapists, the situation is deteriorating. The only solution the government, the people, and the media can think of is to enact tougher laws. But sadly, so far the fear of punishment has not deterred the rapists.

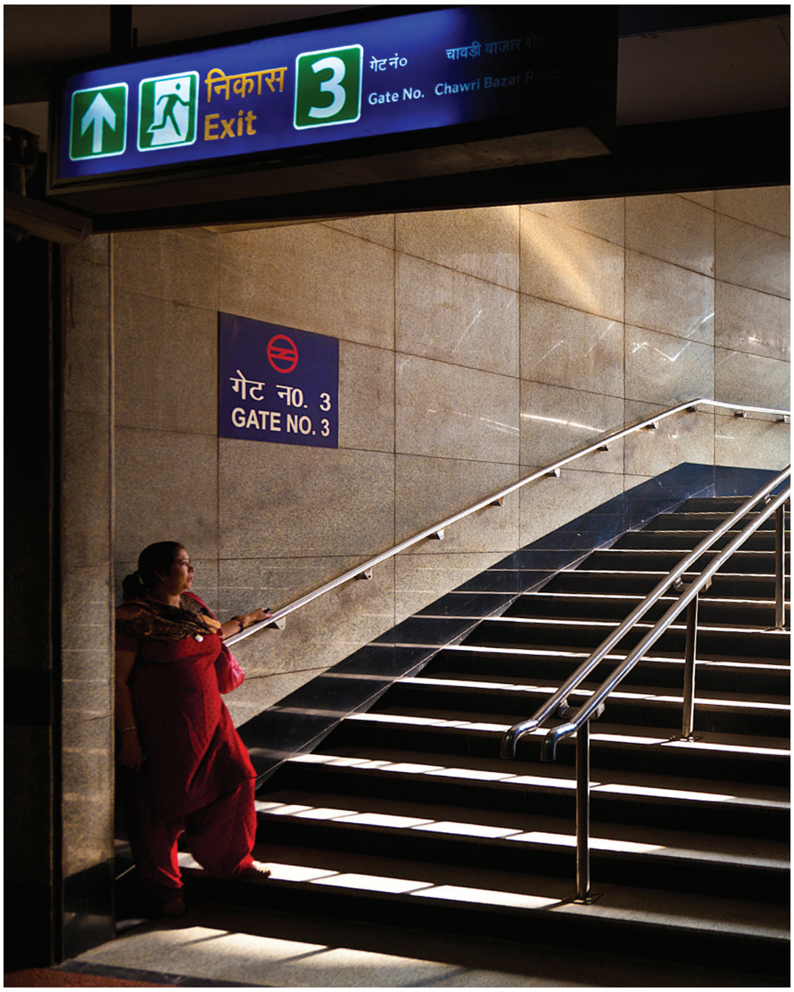
Aggravating the Disease of Lust

Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.21), "There are three gates leading to this hell – lust, anger, and greed." Unfortunately, present-day society is trying its best to aggravate the disease of lust. Obscenity has become common – in movies, TV serials, advertisements, movie songs, and so on. To increase circulation, leading newspapers and magazines are stuffed with pictures of semi-nude women. Internet and mobile-phone pornography is at its peak. Even in cricket tournaments scantily clad cheerleaders are brought in to entice the audience. Provocatively dressed women are used in advertisements to sell almost anything – be it men's shaving cream, shoe polish, electronic gadgets, air conditioners, or toothpaste. A model grabbed media attention by declaring that she would walk naked if the Indian cricket team won the World Cup.

Women are portrayed as objects for gratifying the senses. Today the only cheap commodity available in India is condoms. The unwritten message: "You can have unlimited sex with unlimited partners, but just use condoms."

People are ignorant of the fact that unrestrained sex does not satiate lust but instead aggravates it, like adding fuel to fire. Lust is an extremely powerful psychological and emotional force that produces intense craving for an object. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.39) Lord Kṛṣṇa says that lust is the "eternal enemy . . . which is never satisfied and which burns like fire." In the *Mahābhārata* Vidura tells Yudhiṣṭhira that uncontrolled lust is one of the main reasons people commit crimes. Sex addicts go to any extreme to satisfy their lust. On the fateful night of December 16, the Delhi gang-rapists were on the hunt for sexual satisfaction and could have targeted any woman.

If we rampantly promote, propagate, and advertise lust-



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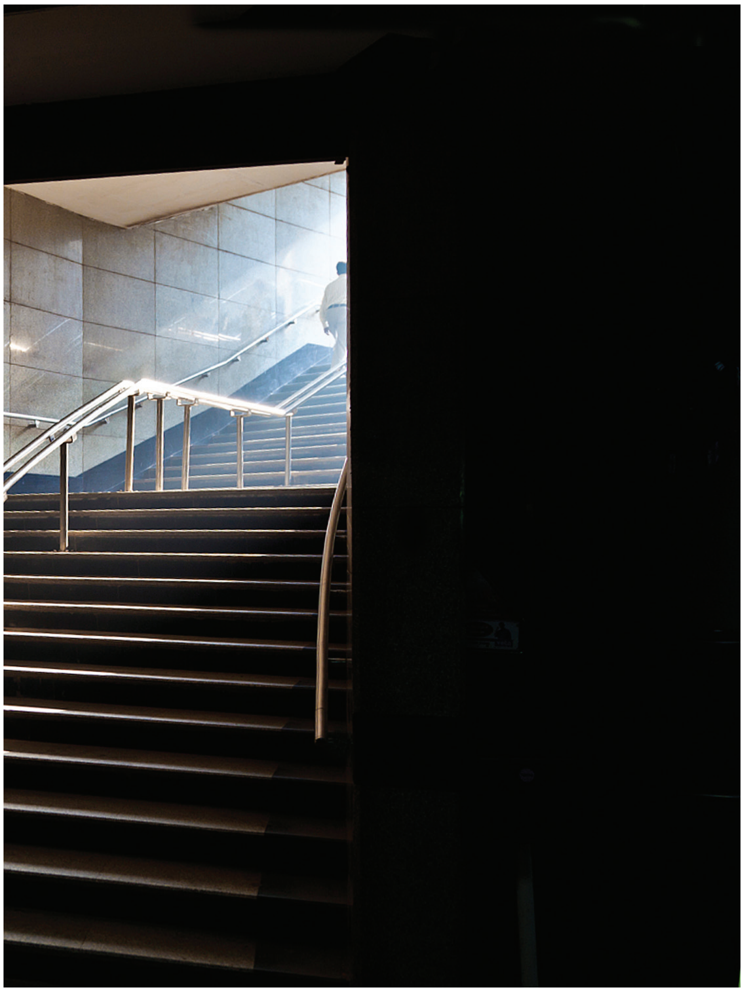
ful tendencies, how can we expect that sexual crimes against women will not occur?

The Vedas *on Women*

Women once occupied a coveted position in Indian society, but today they are finding themselves insecure. Indian society, which has its roots in the Vedic literature, always looked upon women not as objects of lust, but as souls who are part and parcel of God.

The *Vedas* unequivocally attest to the fact that both men and women are children of God and have a specific role to play in this world. This wisdom literature adores the role of a woman as a mother, as a wife, and as a social reformer. In the Vedic tradition the onus of guaranteeing protection to women is entrusted to men. We see how Lord Rāma fought with Rāvaṇa to rescue Sītā Devī, and how Bhīma killed Duryodhana and Duḥśāsana because they tried to violate the modesty of Draupadī. The five Pāṇḍavas always took care of their mother, Kuntī, and never left her unprotected.

Men and women have distinct yet significant traits, which the *Vedas* recommend be harnessed and harmonized. Śrīla Prabhupāda always appreciated the devotional qualities of women. "Women in general, being very simple at heart, can very easily take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and when they develop love of Kṛṣṇa they can easily get liberation from the clutches of *māyā,* which are very difficult for even so-called intelligent and learned men to surpass." (*Kṛṣṇa,* Chapter 23) The *Atharva Veda* (14.1.43–44) states that when a woman marries, she enters "as a river enters the sea . . . to rule along with her husband, as a queen, over the other members of the family."



The Failure of Modern Education

Today there is a big clamor for women's education, and this is commendable. Though considered temples of learning, however, the schools and colleges are not helping women understand their God-gifted virtues. In the name of championing the cause of women, emphasis is more on making women see men as their exploiters or competitors. They are being trained to imitate men in toto – be it in dressing, lifestyle, or type of work. But such artificial emulation has hardly helped women. The obsession with the idea that men and women are the same does not hold much ground. Even a simple basic analysis shows that they are different – in appearance, thinking, behavior, speech, needs, wants, and concerns. Real education is that which can help women understand who they are and their relationship with the Supreme Lord. They should be taught that they are souls temporarily occupying a woman's body. Men and women are equal only on the spiritual level.

Vedic Understanding

All Vedic schools of thought encourage men and women to see each other as souls. Vedic culture bestows utmost respect on women and considers them equal to men on the spiritual level. The role of a woman as a mother is highly revered; she is considered the child's first guru and entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing the child's future. History is filled with stories of women solely responsible for raising a child who performed heroic deeds. Queen Kuntī inculcated great virtues and valor in her five sons. Jijabai's inspiration and child-rearing shaped the life of Shivaji Maharaj, the great Maratha king. Men were taught to address every woman except their wife as "mother." Cāṇakya Paṇḍita has written (*Nīti-śāstra* 12.14): "One who regards another's wife as his mother, another's possessions as a lump of dirt, and treats all other living beings as he would himself is considered to be learned."

As a wife, a woman is supposed to equally share family responsibilities with her husband and take part in making decisions. Thus a mutual respect develops.

Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote and spoke of the importance of the wife: "If one has a nice wife, he is to be considered a most fortunate man. In astrology, a man is considered fortunate who has great wealth, very good sons, or a very good wife. Of these three, one who has a very good wife is considered the most fortunate." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.21.15, Purport) "A wife is addressed as *devī,* not by her name. The husband should address his wife as *devī.* They must be like *devī. Devī* means 'goddess,' and the wife must address the husband as 'lord.' This is the system."

(Lecture, Los Angeles, Dec. 28, 1973)

The Indologist Sir Monier Monier-Williams (1819–1899), who held Oxford's Boden Chair in Sanskrit, wrote, "Indian wives often possess greater influence than wives of Europeans."

Men Are Not Born As Rapists

The venerable position of women depicted in the Vedic literature appears to be an anachronism in today's India. Besides rape, also on the rise are molestation, dowry deaths, and bride burning. Indian society is failing to protect the dignity of women. Enamored by the materialistic life, Indians have willfully given up the Vedic standards of life. Materialism has spread its wings far and wide, sowing the seeds of a godless society. It is inciting people to satisfy their lustful desires by adopting any means. Men are not born as rapists or molesters. The environment mostly shapes the mindset of the people. Today the ease with which one has access to pornographic materials is appalling.

If we seriously want to stop the recurrence of these horrific incidents, we need laws to check vulgarity and obscenity. As we campaign against drug addiction, we should campaign against lust addiction. Sadly today's educational institutions do not teach pupils to control their lusty propensities. Śrīla Prabhupāda, one of the foremost saints of the modern era, explains in *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (4.1): "The kings of all planets are especially meant for the protection of the inhabitants, and therefore the royal order should understand the science of *Bhagavad-gītā* in order to be able to rule the citizens and protect them from material bondage to lust."

Building a Society Where Women Can Live with Dignity

The following three steps can help build a safe and secure environment for women.

Ban pornography: Pornography is one of the most important reasons for the increase in crime against women. An article in *Hindustan Times* reported, "Free availability of porn movies, on internet and otherwise, as well as sale of illicit liquor have contributed to the recent rise in sexual crimes against women, says a survey by Delhi police."*

Two young men who raped a five-year-old girl in New Delhi confessed that the porn movie they were watching on their cell phone instigated them to rape. The government should enforce a complete ban on all sorts of pornography.

Emphasize value education: In today's competitive environment, schools and colleges focus on mak-

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* "Free porn, illicit liquor behind rise in rapes: Delhi Police survey", *Hindustan Times,* May 21, 2013 (http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Free-porn-illicit-liquor-behind-rise-in-rapes-Delhi-Police-survey/Article1-1063212.aspx)

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Toronto's Festival of India in Photos

MADHAVA SMULLEN. PHOTOS BY BRIAN BATISTA BETTENCOURT | This year, celebrating its 40th anniversary, Festival of India hosted a series of public events, with more unique features than ever. ISKCON News takes a look at some of those highlights in photos.

D.C. Gardener Encourages City Temples to Go Green

MADHAVA SMULLEN | As environmentally-friendly living becomes more and more of a concern in a modern society where Earth's resources are fast running out, ISKCON has an increasing responsibility to set a good example.

ISKCON Invited for EU Commission President Meeting

KUMARI KUNTI SHERREITT | This year the Hindu Forum of Europe's (HFE) President Bharti Tailor with General Secretary Mahaprabhu Das (also the Director of ISKCON Communications Europe) represented the Hindu faith for this important meeting.

The Internet is the ideal place for timely news, and iskcon.com, run by ISKCON Communications, maintains an active news page. So whether you want to see what's happening in ISKCON or have some news to report, log on to www.news.iskcon.com.

ing their students materially competent. Almost negligible importance is given to imparting ethical and moral values. The infamous Delhi Public School MMS sex scandal is testimony of the fact that students are indulging in unethical activities. Values and principles espoused by literature like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Īśopaniṣad* need to be included in school and college curriculums. Once a boy or young man develops strong character by imbibing the pristine message of these sacred texts, his conscience will never allow him to indulge in any obnoxious activities. Lust should be nipped at early stages so that it does not escalate to sexual crimes.

Establish a Kṛṣṇa-centered spiritual society: In a spiritual society everyone has the deepest respect and love for each other and understands that everyone is a child of God. Men do not see women as objects of enjoyment or exploitation, but as souls covered by women's bodies. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains:

> The only way to permanently change the criminal habit is to change the heart of the criminal. As you well know, many thieves are arrested numerous times and put into jail. Although they know that if they commit theft they will go to jail, still they are forced to steal, because of their unclean hearts. Therefore without cleansing the heart of the criminal, you cannot stop crime simply by more stringent law enforcement. The thief and the murderer already know the law, yet they still commit violent crimes, due to their unclean hearts.
> —*The Science of Self-Realization*, "Crime: Why and What to Do?"

Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* given by Lord Caitanya is the most potent process to cleanse the heart of lust, greed, and anger. In a Kṛṣṇa-centered society, women will live with honor and dignity and have complete surety of safety and security. ✿

Purushottam Kumar is a member of the congregation at ISKCON Kolkata. He works at Tech Mahindra, Kolkata.

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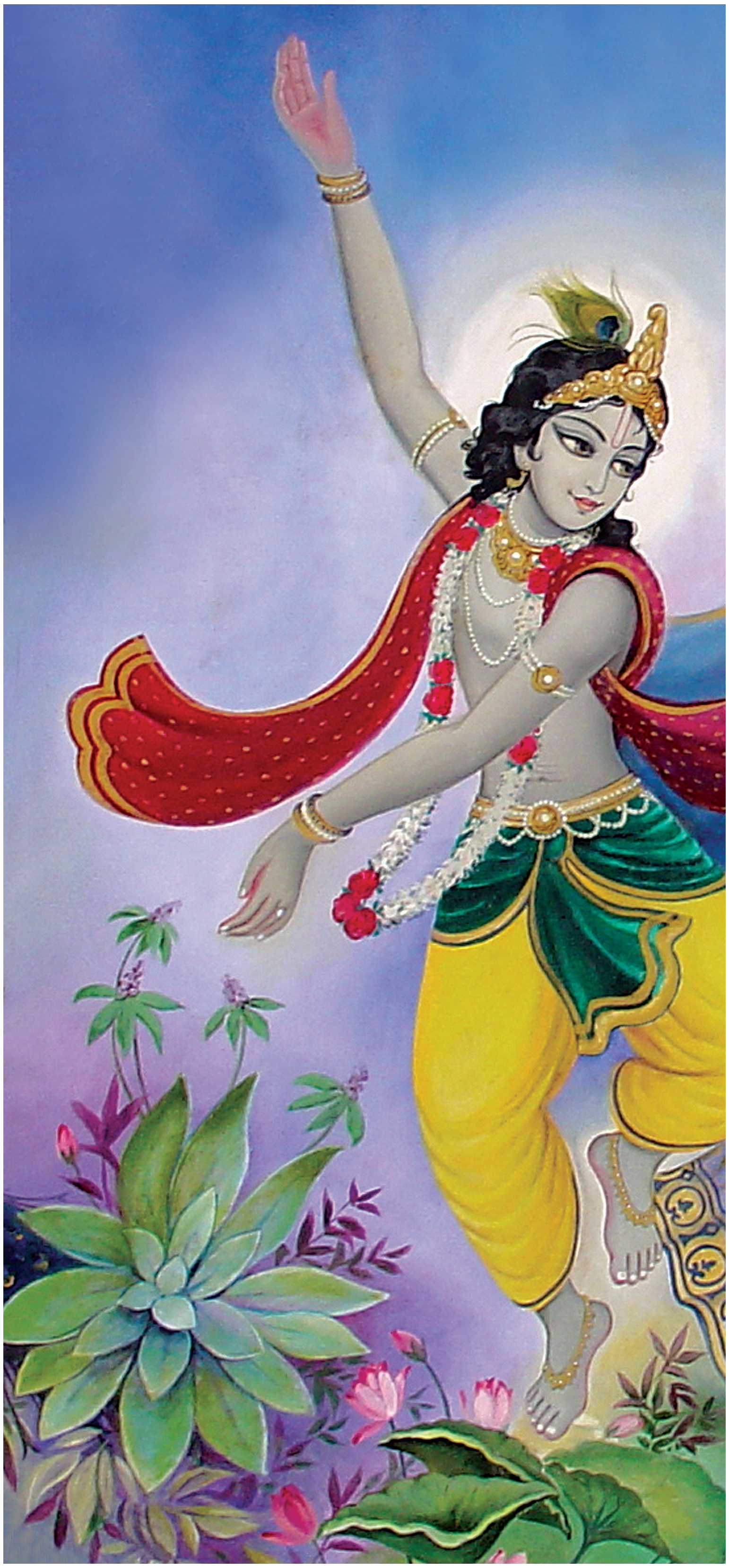
The Movement of the Soul:

In more ways than one,
the word "movement" captures
the essence of Lord Caitanya's
religion of the holy name.

by Satyarāja Dāsa



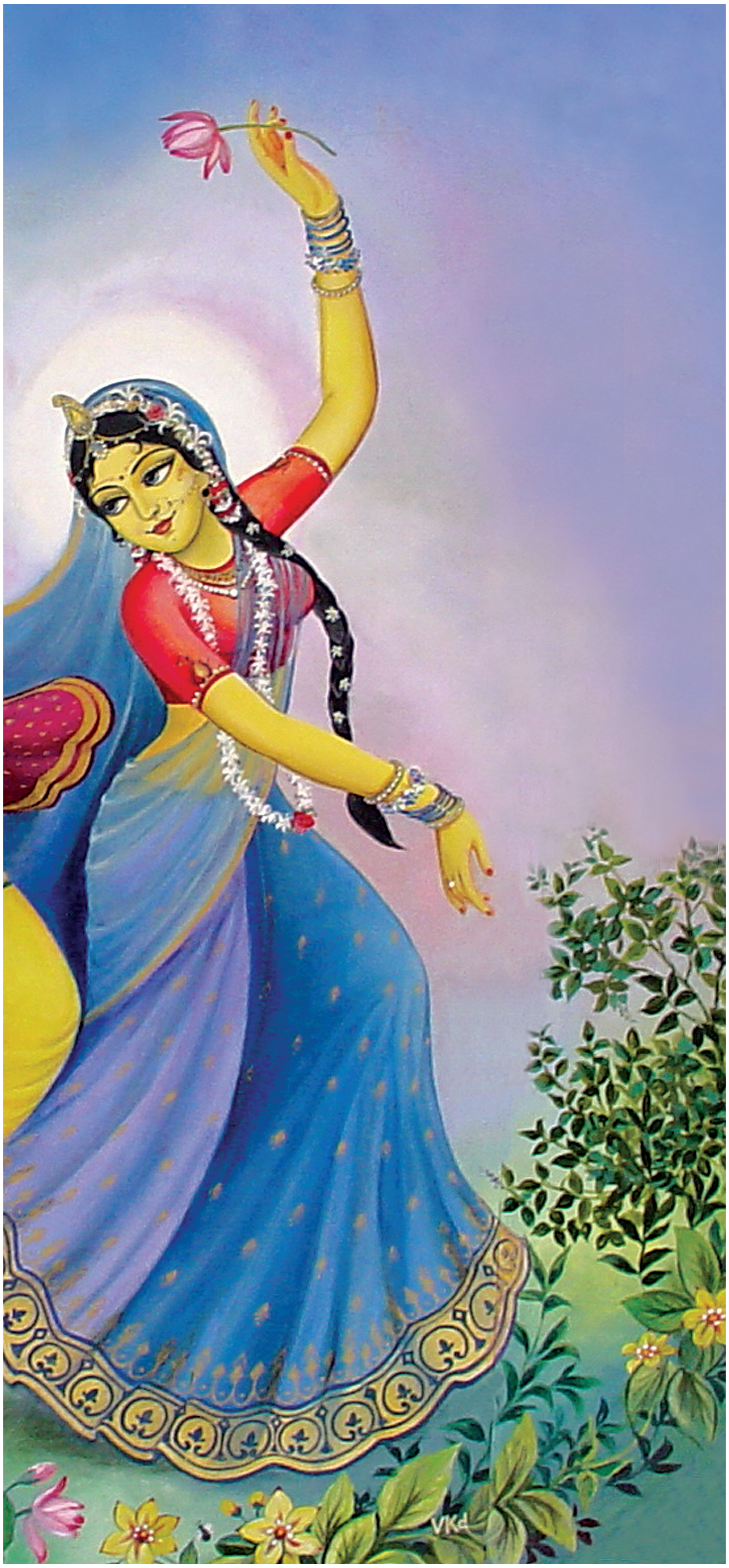
> I offer my respectful obeisances to the devotees of the Lord. Simply by their hearing the two syllables *Kṛṣ-ṇa,* their bodily hairs stand up in ecstasy and they become moved to dance in ecstatic bliss. With their sandals they expertly extricate the fallen souls deeply sunk in the fetid mud of the ocean of repeated birth and death.
>
> (Rūpa Gosvāmī, *Padyāvalī,* Text 54)

KṚṢNA, THE ORIGINAL form of God, is the great cosmic dancer. He exists beyond creation, in the spiritual realm, where every word is a song and every step is a dance (*kathā gānaṁ nāṭyaṁ gamanam, Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.56). He revels in pastimes of love, without direct involvement in the material world. To create and maintain the creation, He expands as Viṣṇu. In the end, He expands as Lord Śiva, known as Naṭarāja, "the king of dancers," who with his rhythmic steps brings material existence to its inevitable close. Dance, then, exists "before the beginning" and winds things up as well.

Yamarāja Dāsa

From Jacksonville Beach, Florida (above), to Puskhar, Rajasthan, India (far right), devotees dance while chanting the mahā-mantra *in glorification of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the supreme dancers.*

Dancing in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness


Painting by Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

Dancing exists in God and has important resonance in the world of created beings. Devotees don't dance whimsically. They prefer that the Lord pulls their strings. That is to say, while devotional dancing is ideally spontaneous, coming from the heart, it manifests because of God's direct intervention. It is a natural reaction to His beauty and pastimes and to the sound of His holy name.

Ananta Vṛndāvana Dāsa

The Divine Puppeteer

In a poem Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote aboard the ship when he first arrived in America, he indirectly addressed the tension between surrender and spontaneity in regard to devotional dancing: "O Lord, I am just like a puppet in Your hands. So if You have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance. O Lord, make me dance as You like." Dancing requires the freedom to move rhythmically to some outward sound, but it is also generally executed in measured steps. Prabhupāda is here using this idea as a simile for giving himself over to God, praying that God will take full control of his life. The simile comes to life in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition by actualizing in the form of dance, literally as well as figuratively.

By using this simile, Prabhupāda is echoing Rāmānanda Rāya, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya from sixteenth-century India: "I dance [*āmi naṭa*] because You are the puller of the strings [*tumi—sūtra-dhāra*]. The way You make me dance is exactly the way I dance [*yei mata nācāo, taiche cāhi nācibāra*]." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 8.132) This idea and its implications permeate Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the book Prabhupāda brought with him on the ship as he sailed to America from India in 1965.

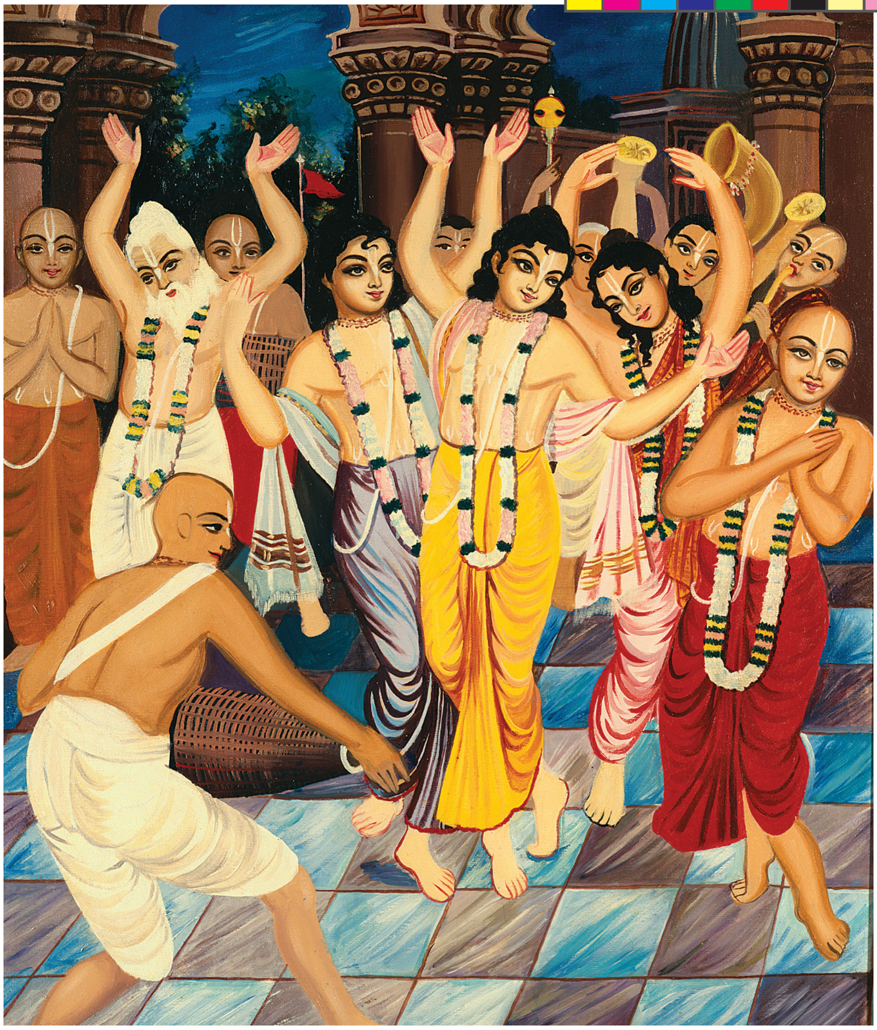
For example, in the *Ādi-līlā* (5.142) we find, "Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is the supreme controller, and all others are His servants. They dance as He makes them do so." Lord Caitanya says, "I firmly believe in these words of My spiritual master, and therefore I always chant the holy name of the Lord, alone and in the association of devotees. That holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa sometimes causes Me to chant and dance, and therefore I chant and dance. Please do not think that I intentionally do it. I do it automatically." (*Ādi* 7.95–96)

Regarding the puppeteer part of the simile, Kavirāja Gosvāmī uses it himself: "Actually *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is not my writing but the dictation of Śrī Madana-mohana [Kṛṣṇa]. My writing is like the repetition of a parrot. As a wooden doll is made to dance by a magician, I write as Madana-gopāla orders me to do so." (*Ādi* 8.78–79)

Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, who wrote an earlier biography of Lord Caitanya, used the simile, too, in the opening verses (Maṅgalācaraṇa) of his *Nityānanda-caritāmṛta*: "I find no beginning or end to the pastimes of Lord Nityānanda [Lord Caitanya's intimate associate]. I write whatever He inspires me to write. Just as a puppet dances only by the control of the puppeteer, whatever I describe is only by the direction of Lord Nityānanda."

Finally, in the nineteenth century, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a great teacher in our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition, also found value in the comparison of a puppeteer and used it as a metaphor in his poetry, specifically in his song *Sata Sandhi Jara Jara*: "A dancing puppet of a hundred joints, your mortal coil in its last moments: this physical form is doomed to destruction. . . . My dear mind, hear the truth attentively: the panacea for this malady – chant Kṛṣṇa's name constantly; Kṛṣṇa is the life of immortality."

The two primary elements of the comparison represent two of the most important aspects of life: fully giving oneself over to God, i.e., allowing Him to be the "puppeteer" in one's life, and dancing in glorification of God.



Five hundred years ago Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu introduced congregational chanting and dancing as the religion for this age.

Again, dancing is found in God Himself. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) famously said, "If they want me to believe in their god, they'll have to sing me better songs. . . . I could only believe in a god who dances."

In all likelihood, Nietzsche wasn't aware of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Lord Caitanya, or Lord Caitanya's movement. But if he were, he would have been pleasantly surprised. His aversion to, and even disbelief in, God as He was commonly understood by the Judeo-Christian tradition of his time – e.g., a remote, aloof entity on high who feels little need to enter into personal relationship with His creation – is entirely understandable.

Nietzsche intuitively knew that if God exists at all, He must be an entity who can dance, a warm and giving being privy to all of the joyous, loving, and lovable activities available to His children. The Bible asks, "Who shall dance with God?" (Hebrews 11:17–22)

Kṛṣṇa, the Great Cosmic Dancer

The earliest Purāṇic texts make clear that God does engage in pleasurable activities. He loves, dances, plays His alluring flute, and interacts in countless fulfilling ways with His eternal associates. From the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we learn of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in idyllic Vṛndāvana. The flowers are always in bloom there, birds perpetually chirp, peacocks crow and dance, bees sweetly hum, and cuckoos sing for the pleasure of all. Kṛṣṇa, always at center stage, makes beautiful music with His flute, hoping to please His elder brother Balarāma and the other cowherd boys who sport with Kṛṣṇa in countless fields for tending cows. Within this setting, Kṛṣṇa and His associates happily dance and sing. As Kṛṣṇa dances, some of the cowherd boys sing, and others play on flutes or blow buffalo horns or clap their hands in time with Kṛṣṇa's movements. In the midst of all this, they glorify Kṛṣṇa: "Dear brother, You are dancing most excellently."

The ultimate dance is found in chapters 29 through 33 of the *Bhāgavatam*'s Tenth Canto. Here we find the story of Lord Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā,* the intimate round dance He enthusiastically enacts with the *gopīs*, the cowherd maidens of Vrindavan, His most intimate loving devotees. In a pastime of transcendent pleasure, Kṛṣṇa lured the young girls into the middle of the forest, where they danced with complete abandon on a full-moon autumn night. Miraculously, Kṛṣṇa appeared between each pair of *gopīs,* dancing simultaneously with each one as if He were with her alone. The *rāsa* dance is beyond the material world, a fully spiritual exchange embodying the essence of divine love.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

> The *rāsa* dance of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* is on the platform of *yogamāyā.* The difference between the platform of *yogamāyā* and *mahāmāyā* is compared in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* to the difference between gold and iron. From the viewpoint of metallurgy, gold and iron are both metals, but the quality is completely different. Similarly, although the *rāsa* dance and Lord Kṛṣṇa's association with the *gopīs* appear like the ordinary mixing of young boys and girls, the quality is completely different. The difference is appreciated by great Vaiṣṇavas because they can understand the difference between love of Krsna and lust. (*Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead,* Chapter 29)

Kīrtana: The New Rāsa-Līlā

In our age of quarrel and hypocrisy, known as Kali-yuga, we are unable to witness – not to speak of enter into – the *rāsa-līlā* unless we become highly qualified by spiritual practice or by the mercy of a pure devotee. Instead, we are encouraged to take advantage of the special *yuga-dharma*, or the religious process of the age, as promulgated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu some five hundred years ago: chanting and dancing in glorification of the Lord. This is called *nāma-saṅkīrtana.*

Śrī Caitanya and His eternal associates inaugurated *nāma-saṅkīrtana* in the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's home in Navadvipa, West Bengal. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas consider that location the *rāsa-sthalī* (stage for the *rāsa-līlā*) of Lord Caitanya's era. The correlation between the *rāsa-sthalī* of Vrindavan and that of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's courtyard can be traced to Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura's *Caitanya Maṅgala* (sixteenth century):

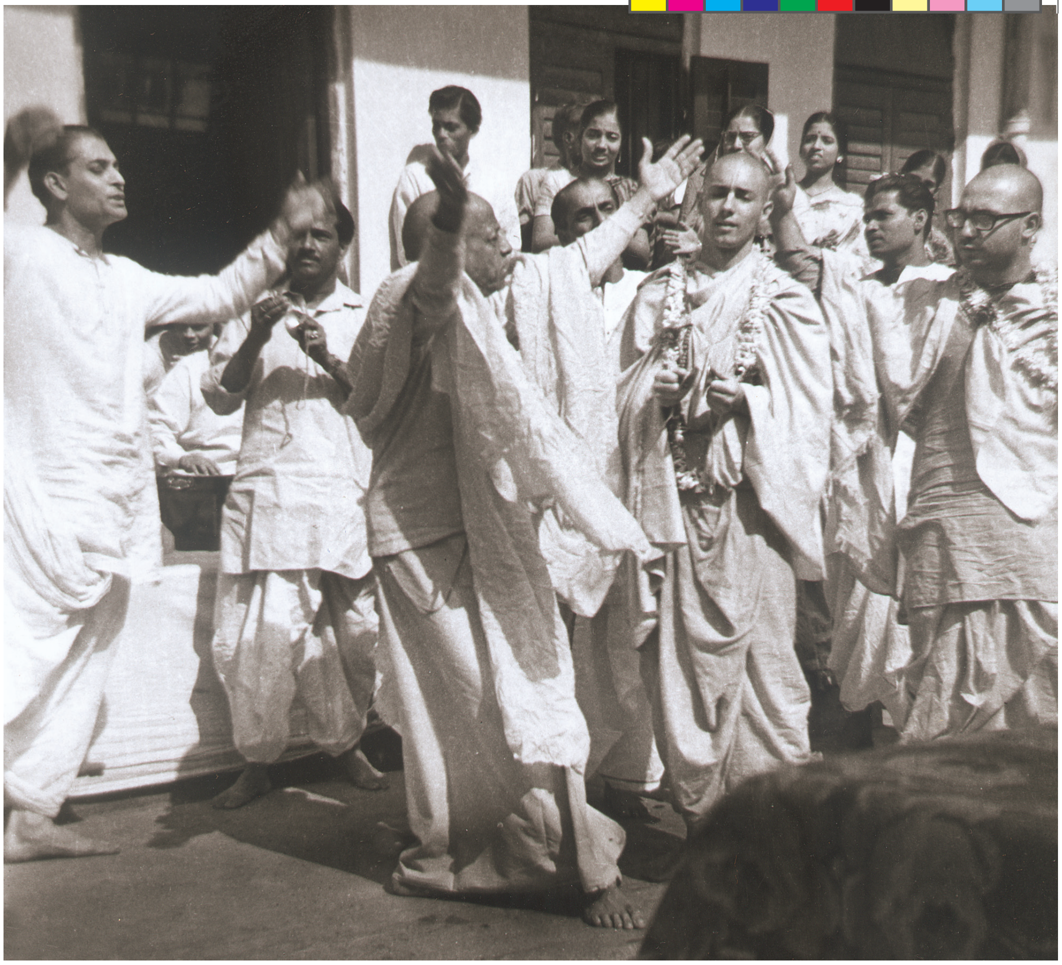
> Clutching Narahari's hand in His other hand, Mahāprabhu reenacted the *rāsa* dance within Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's courtyard. The assembled devotees saw Gaurāṅga [Caitanya] transform into Śyāmasundara [Kṛṣṇa]. Gadādhara then turned into Rādhārāṇī, and Narahari became

Realization
MADISON

Yamarāja Dāsa

Happy Hare Kṛṣṇas chant and dance in the Springtime Tallahassee parade in Florida's capital city.

> Madhumatī-sakhī. All others chanted, “Haribol! Haribol!” as they saw Vrindavan appear before them. The son of Śacī manifested the supreme abode, complete with Gopāla [Kṛṣṇa], *gopīs,* and cows. The cowherd boys and girls of Vraja [Vrindavan] became the *brāhmaṇa* companions of Lord Gaurahari in the age of Kali.
>
> (*Caitanya Maṅgala*, *Madhya* 1.188–194)



Śrīla Prabhupāda dances his classic “Swami step” in Calcutta (above), his former hometown, in 1967. At right, in 1966 Brahmānanda Dāsa (right) and Acyutānanda Dāsa dance in Tompkins Square Park, New York City.

With this as a basis, our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* have emphasized the importance of *kīrtana* as a means to enter the *rāsa-līlā.* In the same way that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa danced with their *gopī* companions in the groves of Vrindavan (the original *rāsa-sthalī*), the divine couple appeared again, this time as one person in the form of Lord Caitanya, to reenact their *rāsa-līlā* in a way more suited to the age: They performed *saṅkīrtana,* the congregational chanting of the holy names, a practice that can be followed by one and all.

Although these two *lilas* – the original *rāsa-līlā* and the *kīrtana* in Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita’s courtyard – are superficially different, they serve the same purpose: the Lord’s highest pleasure. Furthermore, they both bestow love of Kṛṣṇa in the most dynamic and thorough way.

Kavirāja Gosvāmī’s *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* underscores the harmony of these two *līlās* by adding a further dimension: he shows how the *rāsa-līlā* correlates with Mahāprabhu’s *saṅkīrtana* pastime at the Rathayātrā festival in Puri. At that festival, Śrī Caitanya mystically multiplied Himself so that He could enter into seven groups of dancers, with each group feeling He was only with them. As the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 13.53) records it: “Everyone said, ‘Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is present in my group. Indeed, He does not go anywhere else. He is bestowing His mercy upon us.’” This calls to mind the *rāsa-līlā,* wherein Kṛṣṇa replicated Himself for each *gopī* in the circle, and each felt she alone was with Him.

Kavirāja Gosvāmī further articulates the comparison: “Just as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa formerly performed the *rāsa-līlā* dance and other pastimes at Vrindavan, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu performed such uncommon pastimes moment after moment. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s dancing before the Rathayātrā car could be perceived only by pure devotees. Others could not understand. Descriptions of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s uncommon dancing can be found in the revealed scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu danced in great jubilation and inundated all the people with waves of ecstatic love.” (*Madhya* 13.66–68)

Following Śrī Caitanya’s lead, the tradition has consistently emphasized song and dance. The next generation, especially, led by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, and Śyāmānanda Prabhu, showed marked enthusiasm for singing and dancing in glorification of Kṛṣṇa:

> Everyone was drunk with dance. Such astounding streams of tears flowed down the faces of all, their bodies glistening with garlands and sandal. Narottama became intoxicated singing of Gaura’s qualities – and that Gaura Raya appeared, agitated, and with his company. He brought Nityananda, Advaita, Gadadhara, Murari, Svarupa, Haridasa, . . . When they became perceptible, visible to the eyes of everyone present, they were ecstatic. Every person there forgot completely both himself and the time, as if they were transported into the great pandemonium that swept Navadvipa . . . Saci’s son [Caitanya] danced with each of them. Nityananda Prabhu was overwhelmed with bliss and danced beside the beloved Narottama. Advaitacarya danced, carrying along Ramachandra, Shyamananda, and all the rest . . . The manner of that dance intoxicated the worlds, filling them with delight; the earth shuddered from the tramping of feet. Both the manifest and unmanifest came

> together as one. Just how amazing to be possessed in that dance – that experience cannot be fully disclosed. Hearts were thrilled at the wonderfully exhilarating music, accompanied by clapping cymbals and the yells of all present. Drowning in the liquid nectar of those songs, whose body could cling to the solid firmament of the shore? Moment to moment the waves of different emotions welled over them.*

The "Swami Step" Comes West

When Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived in the Western world, he carried this ecstatic tradition of song and dance in his heart. Sanātana Gosvāmī had written in *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta* (1.4.18), "Beginners in *sādhana-bhakti* [devotional service in practice] should dance and sing as a matter of duty." Besides pleasing the Lord and His pure devotees, dancing in *kīrtana* creates auspiciousness for the world: "O king, when the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa dance, their steps crush the inauspiciousness of the earth, their glances destroy the inauspiciousness of the ten directions, and their upraised arms push away the inauspiciousness of the demigods' planets." (*Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* 20.68)

Śrīla Prabhupāda comments in *The Nectar of Devotion* (Chapter 9):

> In the *Dvārakā-māhātmya* the importance of dancing before the Deity is stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa as follows: "A person who is in a jubilant spirit, who feels profound devotional ecstasy while dancing before Me, and who manifests different features of bodily expression can burn away all the accumulated sinful reactions he has stocked up for many, many thousands of years." In the same book there is a statement by Nārada wherein he asserts, "From the body of any person who claps and dances before the Deity, showing manifestations of ecstasy, all the birds of sinful activities fly away upward." Just as by clapping the hands one can cause many birds to fly away, similarly the birds of all sinful activities which are sitting on the body can be made to fly away simply by dancing and clapping before the Deity of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda didn't force anyone to dance; he taught by example. During the early *kīrtanas* at 26 Second Avenue in New York City, the first Kṛṣṇa temple in the West, he would sometimes get up and dance, and the sincere followed suit.

Such dancing is natural. For example, small children sometimes try to attract their parents' attention by raising their arms in the air, dancing around, and calling out with great feeling. Similarly, devotees call out to God, the ultimate parent, by chanting, dancing, and at an advanced stage of spiritual development, rolling on the ground and crying with heartfelt enthusiasm. This is a legitimate way to petition the Lord with prayer.

After a brief jaunt into Washington Square Park in the summer of 1966, Prabhupāda began regularly taking the devotees into Tompkins Square Park, where they would chant and dance in great happiness. Brahmānanda Dāsa and Acyutānanda Dāsa were the first to get up and dance as they had seen Prabhupāda do back at the temple – swinging their bodies from side to side, left foot to right side, right foot to left side, in time with the one-two-three rhythm. They called it "the Swami step." Aside from the joy prompted by the chanting, they were no doubt trying to get Prabhupāda's attention, and he, as a loving spiritual father, was naturally pleased by their humble endeavors. How were they to know they were following the example of Lord Caitanya and His associates, or, more, that they were calling to mind the Lord's *rāsa-līlā*? Only Prabhupāda knew, and he would share this information with them in due course.

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This article was inspired by an earlier paper written by Pika Ghosh, "Dance, Trance, and Transformation: Movement in Gauḍīya Temples," Journal of Vaishnava Studies, *Spring 2013, Vol. 21, No. 2.*

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* *Narottam Vilas* 7, translated in Tony K. Stewart, *The Final Word: The Caitanya-caritamrta and the Grammar of Religious Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 295.

4 Metaphors for Transcendental Knowledge

Academic knowledge provides information of this world, but spiritual knowledge awards eternal liberation.

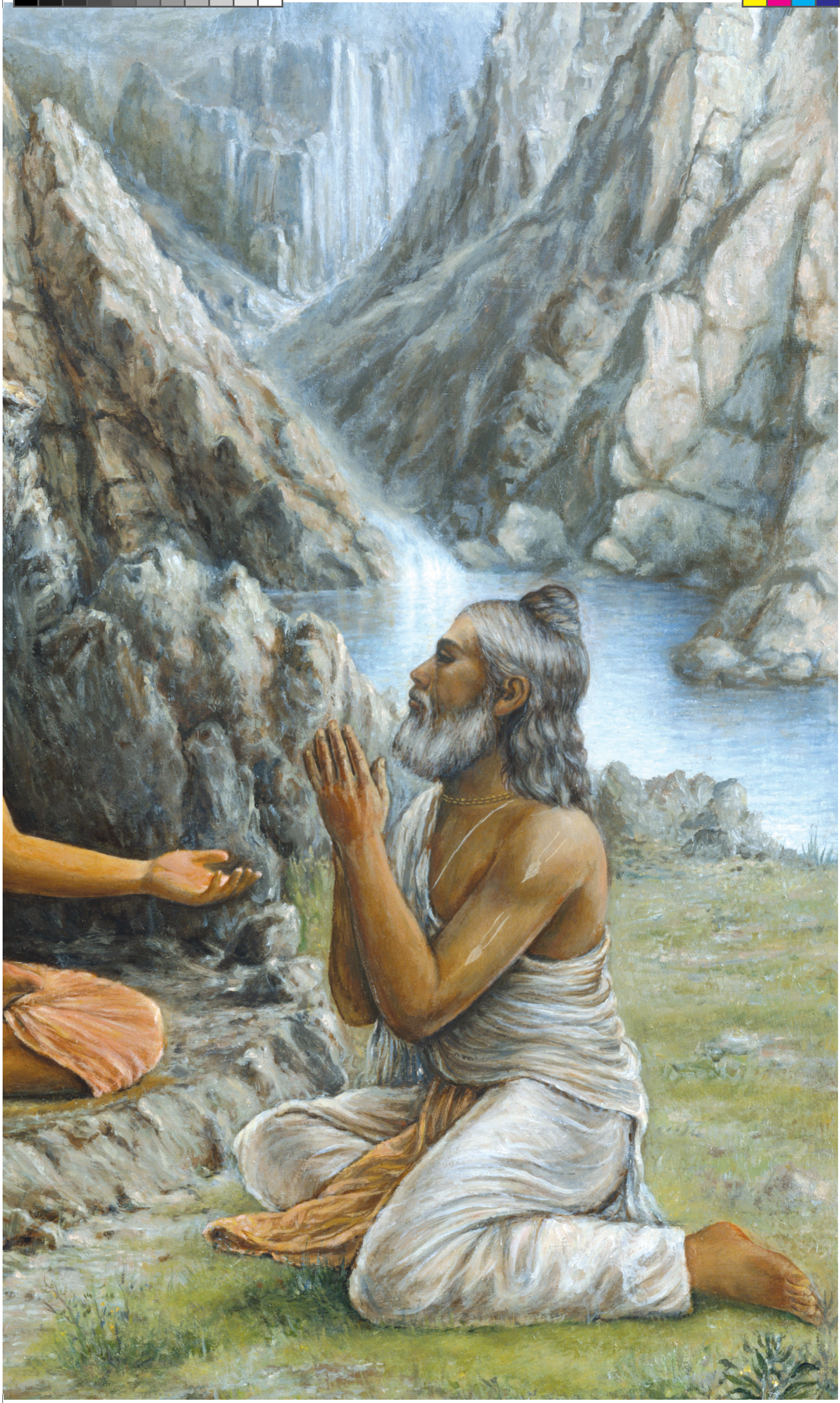
by Mukundamālā Dāsa

ONE OF MY friends in college was known for his immense general knowledge. He knew the names of all recent Hollywood and Bollywood movies, the actors, directors, and producers of each movie, and the winners of Oscar and Filmfare awards from every year. In sports, he knew the winners of each Grand Slam tennis tournament from every year, as well as similar information about football and cricket. He also knew the capital city and currency of each country, and a lot more.

I was impressed by his memory, and I admired his voracious reading. Here I was, struggling to remember basic mathematical and scientific formulae and somehow pass my examinations. I wished I had the ability to retain at least half of what I read daily.

When I came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, I felt less impressed by my friend's general knowledge. I learned that knowledge is meant to produce good character and, ultimately, devotion to God. The so-called knowledge of this world is incomplete, because information in this world changes continuously; what is true today will no longer be true tomorrow. The greater your memory, the greater your capacity to retain information and the greater will be your reputation as a knowledgeable person, but knowledge about this world is simply data loaded into the brain. How

Painting by Praśānta Dāsa



Vidura, the saintly uncle of the Pāṇḍavas, submissively inquires from the sage Maitreya, who was present when Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke His final teachings to Uddhava before leaving this world. Maitreya's answers to Vidura's questions comprise most of the Third and Fourth Cantos of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

can such ever-changing information help us attain anything permanent and everlasting? How can such knowledge help us solve the real problems of life, namely birth, old age, disease, and death?

As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in one of his *Bhagavad-gītā* purports, real knowledge is to know what matter is, what spirit is, and the controller of both. Also, such knowledge must transform our heart by invoking our divine nature, expressed by displaying divine qualities like cleanliness, forgiveness, compassion, and love for all living beings. Although my friend was up-to-date with current affairs and did well in his academics, he clearly didn't possess all these divine qualities. Always unclean, he was addicted to many nasty habits. He doubted the existence of God and, even granting His existence, God's supposed activities.

The *Gītā* presents the condensed essence of all the transcendental knowledge one needs to perfect the human mission.

Material knowledge is called *jaḍa-vidyā,* or knowledge of inert matter, while spiritual knowledge is called *parā-vidyā,* or knowledge of transcendence. *Jaḍa-vidyā* helps us use the body and live in the material world, but *parā-vidyā* can help us attain liberation from the material world and can take us to the eternal, blissful spiritual world. Knowledge of the spirit is considered transcendental because it can free us from our conditional material existence.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* is renowned as the jewel of India's spiritual wisdom because it presents the condensed essence of all transcendental knowledge one needs to know to perfect the human mission. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the unique position of the *Gītā:* "One will find in the *Bhagavad-gītā* all that is contained in other scriptures, but the reader will also find things which are not to be found elsewhere. That is the specific standard of the *Gītā.* It is the perfect theistic science because it is directly spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa." (*Gītā* 1.1, Purport)

What is the effect of transcendental knowledge upon us? How does it benefit us? Lord Kṛṣṇa uses four analogies to answer these questions.

1

KNOWLEDGE AS FIRE

Although fire often acts destructively, Lord Kṛṣṇa compares knowledge to fire in a positive way. Just as fire burns up all impurities, the fire of transcendental knowledge burns up all the karmic baggage we carry.

A conditioned soul accumulates much karma during many lifetimes in the material world. In every human life, the living entity cultivates various desires and acts accordingly, either piously or sinfully. And whether the actions are pious or sinful, inescapable reactions arise out of each action. One must enjoy the good reactions and suffer the bad reactions sometime in the future.

The glory of transcendental knowledge is that it can burn up all reactions at once – both good and bad. *Jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi bhasma-sāt kurute tathā:* "The fire of knowledge burns to ashes all reactions to material activities." (*Gītā* 4.37) But we may not like to hear about our stock of good karma getting burned up: "I have done so much charity and welfare work for others," one may protest. "Why should I lose all those credits?" All reactions, both pleasant and unpleasant, are ultimately bad because they bind us to the material world in the repeated cycle of birth and death. Good actions will promote us to higher planets, where we enjoy heavenly delights, while sinful actions will push us down to hellish planets, where we suffer terrible pain. But even if we go to the heavenly planets, we cannot stay there permanently. Once we exhaust our pious credits, we are forced to come back to earth, where we begin our next set of actions and reactions.

Transcendental knowledge can burn up all our reactions and qualify us to go the eternal spiritual world, from where there is no more coming back.

2

KNOWLEDGE AS A BOAT

The material world is sometimes called *bhava-sāgara,* or an ocean of birth and death. If a man falls into the middle of the ocean, he can never reach the shore, no matter how skilled a swimmer he may be. But if he can get the help of a well-built boat, he can save himself from drowning.

Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā* (4.36) that transcendental knowledge is like the boat that can help you cross the material ocean of nescience:

api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ
   sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛt-tamaḥ
sarvaṁ jñāna-plavenaiva
   vṛjinaṁ santariṣyasi

"Even if you are considered to be the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge you will be able to cross over the ocean of miseries."

Our stay in the material world is caused by material desires. And the root of material desires is *avidyā*, or ignorance, defined as forgetfulness of this truth: "I am the eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa." Transcendental knowledge revives our lost memory of being a servant of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it can immediately award us liberation from the ocean of birth and death.

3

KNOWLEDGE AS A TORCHLIGHT

Compared to our blissful eternal existence, life in the material world is groping around in the darkness, in ignorance of our constitutional position. As soon we begin our conditional life, we forget our real identity and get lost in the temporary pain and pleasure of this world. We have spent many lifetimes in the darkness of the material world in forgetfulness of the life of enlightenment in the spiritual world. To come out of the darkness is not easy; by years of lone struggle we will never succeed. What we need is a torchlight: the illuminating lamp of knowledge. That's another way Kṛṣṇa underscores the importance of transcendental knowledge in the *Bhagavad-gītā.*

For devotees constantly engaged in loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, obtaining transcendental knowledge becomes easy: Kṛṣṇa Himself destroys the ignorance in their lives by providing a torchlight. He promises this in the *Gītā* (10.11):

teṣām evānukampārtham
aham ajñāna-jaṁ tamaḥ
nāśayāmy ātma-bhāva-stho
jñāna-dīpena bhāsvatā

"To show them [those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love] special mercy, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance."

Soon after moving from Bengal to Jagannatha Puri, Lord Caitanya toured South India. In the holy place named Sri Rangam, He met a simple, semi-literate *brāhmaṇa* engrossed in reading the *Bhagavad-gītā.* While reading, tears glided down his cheeks and in ecstasy his bodily hair stood on end. Lord Caitanya asked the *brāhmaṇa* why he was crying. As Śrīla Prabhupāda describes in *Renunciation Through Wisdom,* the *brāhmaṇa* replied, "Whenever I sit down to read the *Gītā,* the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Pārtha-sārathi [Arjuna's chariot driver] appears in my heart. And as soon as I see this form I immediately remember how the Lord is *bhakta-vatsala* [especially kind to His devotees]. This thought makes me cry." In a purport to this pastime in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta,* Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes a verse from the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.23):

yasya deve parā-bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed." Lord Caitanya was extremely pleased upon seeing the devotion of this *brāhmaṇa,* and He told him he had perfected his reading of the *Gītā.* Even though the *brāhmaṇa* was semi-literate, he received the full light of transcendental knowledge from the *Gītā.*

4

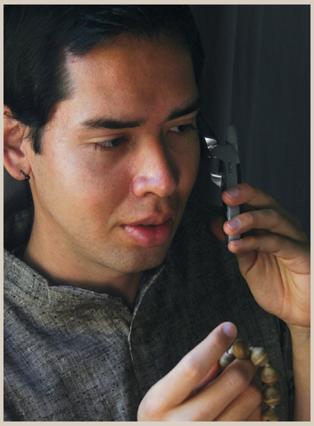
KNOWLEDGE AS A SWORD

One of the biggest challenges to spiritual life is confronting doubts – doubts about the existence of God, the spiritual world, one's own identity, the process of devotional service, and others.

Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.40), "Ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness; they fall down. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next."

In his overview of the *Gītā* titled *Surrender Unto Me,* ISKCON author Bhūrijana Dāsa writes that Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, in commenting on this verse, explains that doubters think, "I don't know whether this process will be effective in my case." Bhūrijana Dāsa continues: "Doubters have some faith, but they nevertheless doubt that following scripture will truly award results. They thus follow, but without full faith, hope, and optimism. Such doubters achieve happiness neither in this world nor in the next. Even fools attain some material happiness. Doubters attain none."

Therefore Arjuna often addresses Kṛṣṇa as Madhusūdana, "the



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killer of Madhu.” Just as Kṛṣṇa effortlessly killed the demon Madhu, Arjuna requests Kṛṣṇa to kill the demonic doubts preventing him from performing his duty.

Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that doubts arise due to ignorance (*ajñāna-sambhūtam*), and He instructs Arjuna to cut them down with the sword of knowledge.

tasmād ajñāna-sambhūtaṁ
hṛt-sthaṁ jñānāsinātmanaḥ
chittvainaṁ saṁśayaṁ yogam
ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha bhārata

“Therefore the doubts which have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be slashed by the weapon of knowledge. Armed with yoga, O Bhārata, stand and fight.” (*Gītā* 4.42)

Knowledge Through Devotion

The value of transcendental knowledge cannot be overestimated. One who has this knowledge quickly attains the supreme peace because he is free from all dualities and misconceptions of life. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “By realized knowledge, one becomes perfect. By transcendental knowledge one can remain steady in his convictions, but by mere academic knowledge one can be easily deluded and confused by apparent contradictions.” (*Gītā* 6.8, Purport)

In glorifying transcendental knowledge in the following words, Kṛṣṇa reveals that it is achieved by devotional service:

na hi jñānena sadṛśaṁ
pavitram iha vidyate
tat svayaṁ yoga-saṁsiddhaḥ
kālenātmani vindati

“In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has become accomplished in the practice of devotional service enjoys this knowledge within himself in due course of time.” (*Gītā* 4.38) ❁

Mukundamālā Dāsa is a member of the BTG India editorial team.

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Solapur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Land, 171/2 Uttar Kasabe, Akkalkot Rd., Bhaktivedanta Marg, near New Jakat Naka, Dist. Solapur, 413006/ Tel. 9371178393 or 9370651251/ shursendas@yahoo.co.in
Sri Rangam, TN — 103 Amma Mandapam Rd., Sri Rangam, Trichy 620 006/ Tel. (431) 2433945/ iskcon_srirangam@yahoo.com.in
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala — Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/ Tel. (471) 2328197/ jsdasa@yahoo.co.in
Tirunelveli, TN — 10B Tiruvananthapuram, Near Vannarapettai Circle, 627 002/ Tel. (462) 2501640
◆ **Tirupati, AP —** K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (877) 2231760 or 2230009/ revati.raman.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.tirupati@pamho.net)
Udhampur, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Srila Prabhupada Nagar, 182 101/ Tel. (1992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
Ujjain, MP — 35–37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Ananda, 388 120/ Tel. (2692) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 246422 or 222617
Vellore, TN — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Road, Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandaal, Vijayawada, Dist. Guntur 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
Visakhapatnam, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar-45 (City office and mail: Plot No. 52, Pandurangapuram, Beach Rd., Visakhapatnam 530 043)/ Tel. (891)2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net)
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Dist. Mathura, 281 124/ Tel. & Fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: Tel. (565) 2540022; ramamani@sancharnet.in)
Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 426182
Yamunanagar, Haryana — ISKCON Hare Krishna Dham, Hare Krishna Marg, Raghunathpuri, Yamunanagar 135001/ Tel. (1732) 321001 or (mobile) 09355330775/ vishu_bakshi05@yahoo.co.in

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Ahmedabad District, Gujarat (Hare Krishna Farm) — Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
Assam — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj

Many temples have their own websites, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com. Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). For information on international calling, go to www.howtocallabroad.com. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

Centers Around the World

Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (218) 623473
Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., Dist. R.R., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263/ naimisaranya@pamho.net
Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Odisha — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (2622) 63546
Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24866922 or 24866009
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura 395005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net

CANADA

Brampton-Mississauga, Ontario — Unit 20, 1030 Kamato Dr., L4W 4B6/ Tel. (416) 840-6587 or (905) 826-1290/ iskconbrampton@gmail.com
Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario —** 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
◆ **Toronto, Ontario —** 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ info@torontokrishna.com
◆ **Vancouver, B.C. —** 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe: (604) 433-7100 or (888) 433-8722/ akrura@krishna.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Ashcroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P. O. Box 99, V0K 1A0)/ Tel. (250) 457-7438/ iskconsaranagati@hotmail.com

U.S.A.

◆ **Atlanta, Georgia —** 1287 South Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., 30306/ Tel. & fax: (404) 377-8680/ admin@atlantaharekrishnas.com
Baltimore, Maryland — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 744-1624/ contact@iskconbaltimore.org
Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ rajan416@yahoo.com
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ info@iskconboston.org
Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ chicagoiskcon@yahoo.com
Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ premvilasdas.rns@gmail.com
◆ **Dallas, Texas —** 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetariantaste@aol.com
◆ **Denver, Colorado —** 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052
Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari108@gmail.com
◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii —** 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-4913/ hawaii.iskcon@gmail.com
Houston, Texas — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ management@iskconhouston.org
Kansas City, Missouri — 5201 Paseo Blvd., 64110/ Tel. (816) 924-5619/ rvc@rvc.edu
Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ info@lagunatemple.com
Las Vegas, Nevada — Govinda's Center of Vedic India, 7181 Dean Martin Dr., 89118/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
◆ **Los Angeles, California —** 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ membership@harekrishnala.com
◆ **Miami, Florida —** 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave., #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 461-1348/ devotionalservice@iskcon-miami.org
New Orleans, Louisiana — 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 304-0032 (office) or (504) 638-1944 (temple)/ gopal211@aol.com
◆ **New York, New York —** 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ ramabhadra@aol.com
◆ **New York, New York —** The Bhakti Center, 25 First Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 253-6182
Orlando, Florida — 2651 Rouse Rd., 32817/ Tel. (407) 257-3865/ info@iskconorlando.com
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 41 West Allens Ln., 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ iskconphilly@aol.com
◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania —** 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ savecows@aol.com
Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ premadhatridd@live.com
Portland, Oregon — 2095 NW Aloclek Dr., Suites 1107 & 1109, Hillsboro, 97124/ Tel. (503) 675-5000/ info@iskconportland.com
◆ **St. Louis, Missouri —** 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ iskcon.stl@pamho.net
Salt Lake City, Utah — 965 E. 3370 South, 84106/ Tel. (801) 487-4005/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
San Antonio, Texas — 6772 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 401-6576/ aadasa@gmail.com
◆ **San Diego, California —** 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500 or 272-8263/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — Mountain View, California, 1965 Latham St., 94040/ Tel. (650) 336-7993/ isvtemple108@gmail.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish, 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah —** Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ tallahassee.iskcon@gmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ madhupati.jas@pamho.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona —** 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ sandaminidd@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ info@iskconofdc.org

RURAL COMMUNITIES

◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti) —** 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ alachuatemple@gmail.com
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonatha@gmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) —** R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Ln., 37359/ Tel. (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd., 17082/ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ dhruva.bts@pamho.net
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888/ madanmohanmohini@yahoo.com

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Ln., BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (28) 9062 0530
Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (121) 420 4999/ birmingham@iskcon.org.uk
◆ **Cardiff, Wales —** Cafe Atma / The Soul Centre, 40 Crwys Road, Cathays, CF24 4NN/ +44 (29) 20 390 391, cafe.atma@gmail.com
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland —** 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
Leicester, England — 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (1555) 894790/ karunabhavan@aol.com
◆ **London, England (city) —** Radha-Krishna Temple, 10 Soho Street, W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (20) 7437 3662; shop, 7440 5221; Govinda's Restaurant, 7440 5229/ info@iskcon-london.org
◆ **London, England (country) —** Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Ln., Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ info@krishnatemple.com; (for accommodations:) bmguesthouse@krishna.com
London, England (south) — 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 7988857530/ krishnaprema89@hotmail.com
London, England (Kings Cross) — 102 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (20) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (161) 226 4416/ contact@iskconmanchester.com
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (191) 272 1911
◆ **Swansea, Wales —** Govinda's, 8 Craddock Street, SA1 3EN/ +44 (1792) 468 469/ info@iskconwales.org.uk; restaurant, info@govindas.org.uk

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London, England — (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor: Krishna conscious programs are held regularly in more than forty other cities in the U.K. For information, contact ISKCON Reader Services, P. O. Box 730, Watford WD25 8EZ, UK; www.iskcon.org.uk)
Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland — Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (28) 6772 1512/ govindadwipa@pamho.net

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 475 0309/ info@govindas.ie

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (8) 8359-5120/ iskconsa@tpg.com.au
Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (7) 3379-5455
Canberra — 44 Limestone Ave., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (2) 6262-6208
Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (3) 9699-5122/ melbourne@pamho.net
Perth — 155–159 Canning Rd., Kalamunda (mail: P.O. Box 201 Kalamunda 6076)/ Tel. +61 (8) 6293-1519/ perth@pamho.net
Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9959-4558/ admin@iskcon.com.au
Sydney — Govinda's Yoga and Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ sita@govindas.com.au

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (3) 5288-7383
Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane, off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock (mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325)/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ iskconfarm@mac.com
Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ ajita@in.com.au

RESTAURANTS

Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st Floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (7) 3210-0255
Brisbane — Krishna's Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., West End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net
Burleigh Heads — Govinda's, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au
Maroochydore — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Ave., QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (7) 5451-0299
Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939
Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578
Perth—Govinda's Restaurant, 194 William St., Northbridge, W. A. 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1684/ perth@pamho.net

NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

Christchurch, NZ — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (3) 366-5174/ iskconchch@clear.net.nz
Hamilton, NZ — 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (7) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz
Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912
Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 6664112/ regprakash@excite.com
Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ vdas@frca.org.fj
Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243
Sigatoka, Fiji — Sri Sri Radha Damodar Temple, Off Mission St., Sigatoka Town/ Tel. +679 9373703 or 6520866/ drgsmarna@connect.com.fj
Suva, Fiji — 166 Brewster Street (mail: P.O. Box 4229, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 3318441/ iskconsuva@connect.com.fj
Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (4) 478-4108/ info@iskconwellington.org.nz
Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian Street (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/ Tel. +64 (4) 801-5500/ yoga@gaurayoga.co.nz

RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (9) 412-8075

RESTAURANT

Wellington, NZ — Higher Taste Hare Krishna Restaurant, Old Bank Arcade, Ground Floor, Corner Customhouse, Quay & Hunter St., Wellington/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233

EUROPE (partial list)

Amsterdam — Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX/ Tel. +31 (20) 675-1404/ contact@amsterdhama.nl
Barcelona — Plaza Reial 12, Entlo 2, 08002/ Tel. +34 93 302-5194/ templobcn@hotmail.com
Bergamo, Italy — Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola), 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940706/ villagio.hare.krsna@hare.krsna.it
Budapest — III. Lehel Street 15–17 (Csillaghedy), 1039 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 391-0435/ nai@pamho.net
Copenhagen — Skjulhøj Alle 44, 2720 Vanløse, Copenhagen/ Tel. +45 4828 6446/ iskcon.denmark@pamho.net
Grödinge, Sweden — Radha-Krishna Temple, Korsnäs Gård, 14792 Grödinge/ Tel. +46 (8) 53029800/ bmd@pamho.net
Helsinki — Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180/ Tel. +358 (9) 694-9879 or -9837/ Email: harekrishna@harekrishna.fi
◆ **Lisbon —** Rua Dona Estefãnia, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351 (1) 314-0314 or 352-0038
Madrid — Espíritu Santo 19, 28004 Madrid/ Tel. +34 91 521-3096
Oslo — Roahagan 1D, Oslo 0754/ Tel. +47 (22) 062266/ gaurahari.sdha@pamho.net
Paris — 230 Avenue de la Division Leclerc, 95200 Sarcelles Village/ Tel. +33 682590079/ paris@pamho.net
Prague, Czech Republic — Postal address: Hare Krishna Temple, Luzce 48, 267 18, post office Karlstejn, Czech Republic (for directions: http://harekrsna.cz/cvs/how_get_there)/ Tel. +420 311 516 558 or +420 603 205 991/ info@harekrsna.cz
◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium —** Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926 (restaurant: 321421)/ radhadesh@pamho.net
◆ **Rome —** Govinda Centro Hare Krsna, via di Santa Maria del Pianto 16, 00186/ Tel. +39 (6) 68891540/ govinda.roma@harekrsna.it
◆ **Stockholm —** Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240/ Tel. +46 (08) 654-9002; Restaurant: Tel. & fax: +46 (8) 654-9004/ lokanatha@hotmail.com
Warsaw — Mysiadlo k. Warszawy, 05-500 Piaseczno, ul. Zakret 11/ Tel. +48 (22) 750-7797 or -8247/ kryszna@post.pl
Zürich — Bergstrasse 54, 8032/ Tel. +41 (044) 262 33 88/ kgs@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Abentheuer (Goloka Dhama) — Bückingstr. 4a-8, 55767 Abentheuer/ Tel. +49: (6782) 2214 or (6782) 109 845/ info@goloka-dhama.de
France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) — Domaine d'Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (2) 5440-2395
Germany (Simhachalam) — Zielberg 20, 94118 Jandelsbrunn/ Tel. +49 (8583) 316/ info@simhachalam.de
Hungary (New Vraja-dhama) — Krisna-völgy, 8699 Somogyvamos, Fö u, 38/ Tel. & fax: +36 (85) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu
Italy (Villa Vrindavan) — Via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FL)/ Tel. +39 (55) 820054/ isvaripriya@libero.it
Spain (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) Brihuega, Guadalajara/ Tel. +34 949 280436

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Cologne, Germany — Govindam, Roonstrasse 3, 50674 Köln
Locarno, Switzerland — Govinda Restaurant, Via Della Motta 10, Locarno 6600/ Tel. +41 (91) 7523852 or 796260804/ radhakanta@pamho.net
Milan — Govinda's, Via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (2) 862417
Oslo — Krishna's Cuisine, Sørkedalsveien 10, 0369 Oslo/ Tel. +47 (2) 269-2269
Zürich, Switzerland — Mohini, Weinbergstr, 15, 8001 Zürich/ Tel. +41 44 252 52 11/ info@mohini.ch

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (partial list)

Kiev — 16, Zorany per., 04078/ Tel. +380 (44) 4338312, 4347028, or 4345533
Moscow — Leningradsky Prospect, Vladenie 39 (mail: Begovaya str., 13, OPS 284, a/ya 17, 125284 Moscow)/ Tel. +7 (495) 7394377/ temple@veda.ru

ASIA (partial list)

Bangkok, Thailand — Soi 3, Tanon Itsarapap, Toonburi/ Tel. +66 29445346, 814455401, or 897810623/ swami.bvv.narasimha@pamho.net
Chittagong, Bangladesh — Sri Krishna Mandir, in front of Afmi Plaza, Prabartak Sangha (mail: P.O. Box 440)/ Tel. +880 (31) 2551950, 610822; or 1819395948/ iskconctg@gmail.com
Dhaka, Bangladesh — 79 Swamibag, Dhaka-11/ Tel. +880 (2) 7122747 or 7122488/ info@iskconbd.org
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Since God Was a Boy

"I'VE BEEN WORKING here since God was a boy," I heard someone say recently. Amusing as the expression is in its own right, for devotees of Kṛṣṇa it has an extra twist: we know that God is still a boy.

The saying assumes, of course, that God has been around so long He must be an old man by now. That image is deeply imbedded in the minds of many people, especially in the West. Even if they understand that the image is inaccurate, the suggestion that the juvenile Kṛṣṇa is God may not feel right to them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda used to tell the story of a man waiting to see William Gladstone, prime minister under Queen Victoria during the heyday of the British Empire. After quite some time had passed, the man grew impatient and opened the door to Mr. Gladstone's chambers, only to find that one of the world's most powerful men was playing as a horse for his grandchildren to ride.

These days, it might be hard for us to understand how disconcerting this moment must have been for the guest. Our over-exposure to the foibles of today's leaders destroys any sense of awe toward them. But we can guess that this man was completely unprepared to find the prime minister, in the middle of the workday, enjoying a domestic interlude rather than conducting the business of the empire.

I suspect that a similar confusion strikes when people see depictions of God as a charming, ever-youthful cowherd named Kṛṣṇa. That's just not the image of God they've had in mind their whole life.

For people who accept that God has a form (unfortunately, maybe a diminishing group), the image of Him as an old man makes sense. After all, He's the original patriarch. How could He look young?

This logic is a good illustration of the limits of guesswork, or speculation. When applied to theology, it can provide seemingly reasonable ideas about God, but will always be inconclusive. The simple reason: He's a person, and we can never truly know anyone by guessing based on our observations. Intimate knowledge of people comes when they reveal themselves to us.

The Vedic scriptures abound in God's revelations about His unique personality, and those who know Him best confirm His words by relating their direct experiences.

One significant thing we learn about God in books like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is that His work of creating, maintaining, and destroying the material world is secondary to His domestic life. In His original form as Kṛṣṇa, He simply enjoys with His friends and family. This picture of God is eminently reasonable. After getting over the initial shock of learning that God's an eternal teenager, anyone can understand that it makes sense for God, who can do whatever He likes, to spend His time in leisurely pursuits of His own choosing. And because He's omnipotent, everything about His life in the beautiful setting of His eternal rural home is perfect.

Conditioned as we are by our existence in the material world, we might object, "Wouldn't God get bored? I like my job! I get bored during vacations."

A few points: Unlike us, Kṛṣṇa can have fun at home and do all His "work" at the same time by duplicating and expanding Himself unlimitedly; everything He does is called *līlā*, or "pleasurable pastime"; He never gets bored.

And neither will we when we finally reenter His world of unending happiness.

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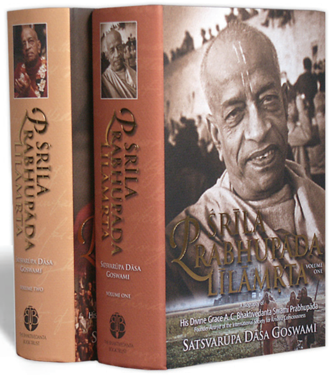
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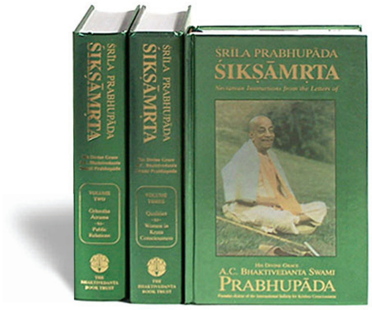
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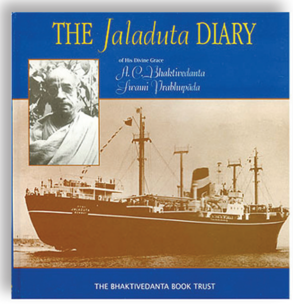
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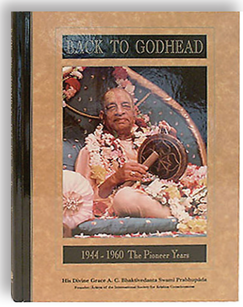
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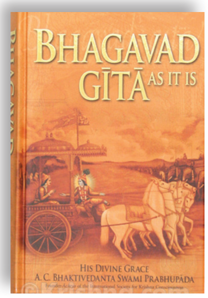
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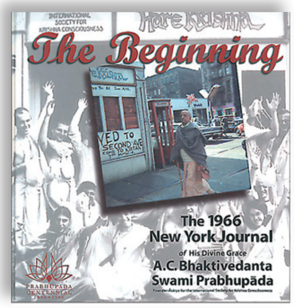
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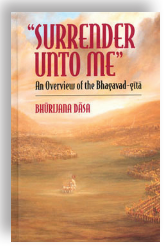
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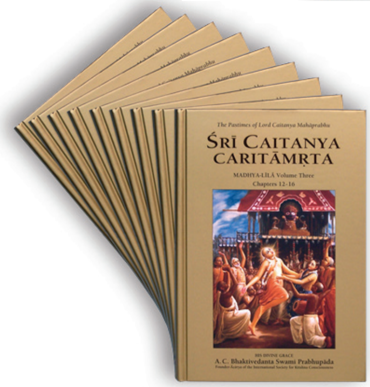
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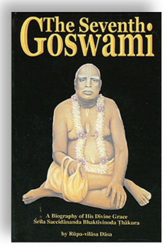
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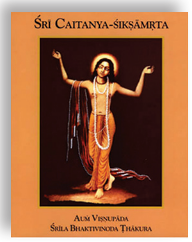
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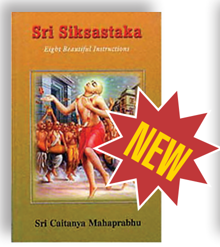
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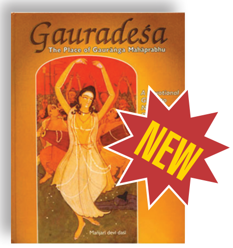
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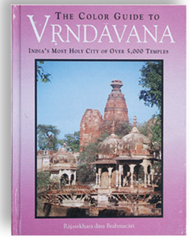
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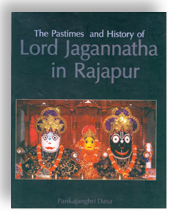
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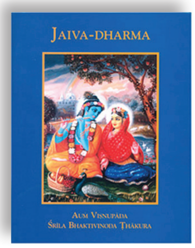
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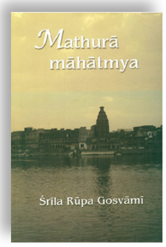
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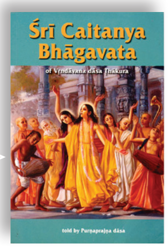
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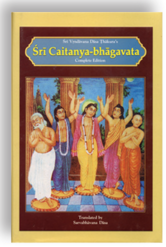
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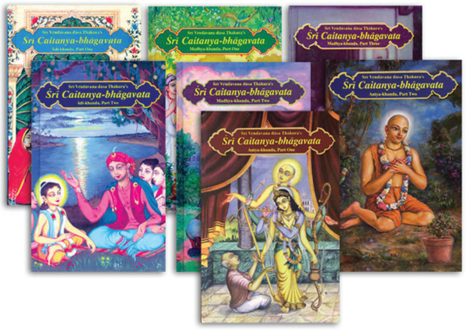
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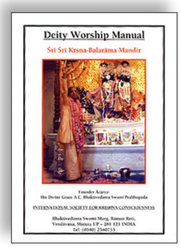

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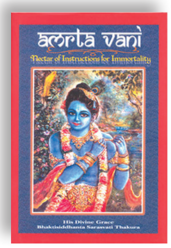

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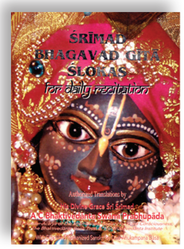

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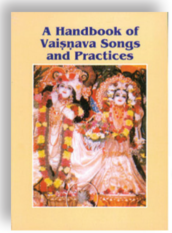

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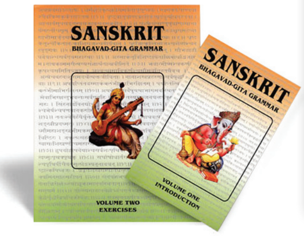

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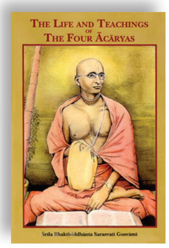

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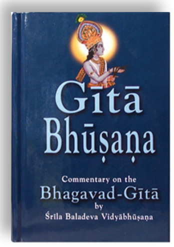

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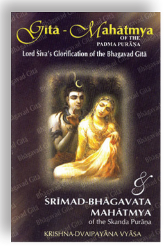

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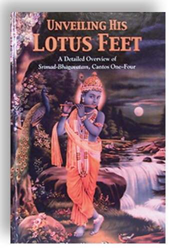

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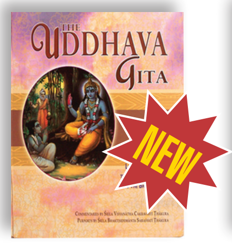

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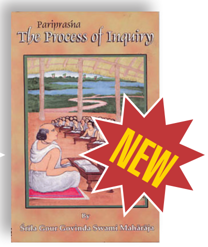

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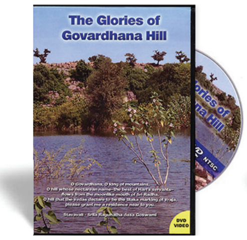

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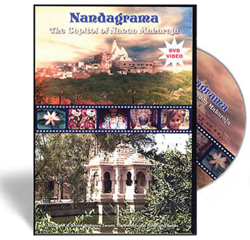

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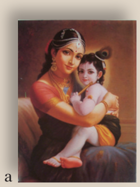
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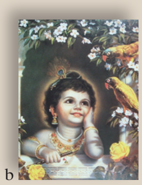
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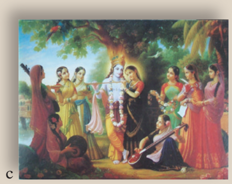
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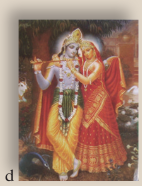
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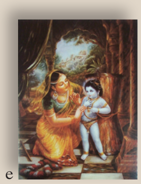
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VEDIC THOUGHTS

[The] gross ignorance of the mass of people, including even the so-called scientists and philosophers, makes life a risky situation in which human beings do not know whether they are making progress in life. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.5.30), they are simply progressing to the darkest region of material existence. . . . The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has therefore been started to give philosophers, scientists, and people in general the proper knowledge about the destiny of life. Everyone should take advantage of this movement and learn the real goal of life.

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.21.23, Purport

That which the Vedāntists describe as unmanifest and infallible, that which is known as the supreme destination, that place from which, having attained it, one never returns – that is My supreme abode.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Bhagavad-gītā 8.21

All sins are destroyed and all good fortune is created by the Supreme Lord's qualities, activities, and appearances, and words that describe these three things animate, beautify, and purify the world. On the other hand, words bereft of His glories are like the decorations on a corpse.

Śrī Akrūra
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.38.12

It has been conclusively decided in the scriptures, after due consideration, that the ultimate goal for the welfare of human society is detachment from the bodily concept of life and increased and steadfast attachment for the Supreme Lord, who is transcendental, beyond the modes of material nature.

Śrī Sanat-kumāra
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.22.21

All glories to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is called by different names such as Hari, Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma! He is the auspicious resting place of all living entities within the universe, and He delights the minds of all souls. Wise sages maintain great reverence for His holy name and constantly sing it by filling their mouths with the sound.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka, 2

His abundantly beautiful complexion belittles the splendor of combined rainclouds, black eye cosmetics, and sapphires. His garments appear effulgent like a rising sun tinted like *kuṁkum* powder and enhanced by shining bolts of lightning. His perfectly formed limbs are anointed with sandalwood paste mixed with camphor and saffron. May Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of the king of the cowherd men, grant me the service of His own lotus feet.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī
Govinda-līlāmṛta 17.51

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North America
For May/June

May 16–18: Houston, Grand Opening of New Temple
May 24–26 (Memorial Day Weekend): Baltimore Rathayātrā
June 6–8: Atlanta Pānihāṭi Festival and Rathayātrā
June 14: New York Rathayātrā
June 21: Chicago Rathayātrā
June 28: Bloomington, Il., Rathayātrā

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